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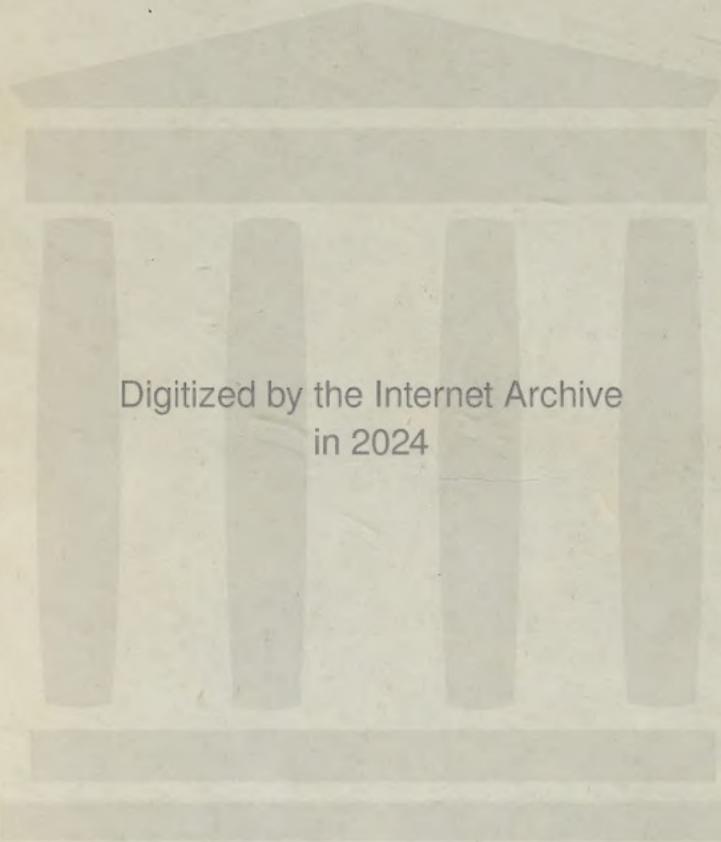
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Rt. Rev. EUGENE O'CONNELL,

## **LOS ANGELES,**

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# ESSAYS

## CHIEFLY THEOLOGICAL.

BY THE

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"Credo in Unam, Sanctam, Catholicam, et Apostolicam Ecclesiam".  
*Symbol. Nicæn.*

Credo "Sanctam Apostolicam sedem et Romanum Pontificem in universum orbem tenere principatum, et ipsum Pontificem Romanum successorem esse Beati Principis Apostolorum, et verum Christi vicarium, totiusque ecclesiae caput, et omnium Christianorum Patrem et Doctorem existere; et ipsi in Beato Petro pascendi, regendi, et gubernandi universalem ecclesiam, a Domino nostro Jesu Christo plenam potestatem traditam fuisse".

*Concil. Florentin.*

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THIRD SERIES.

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## TO THE READER.

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THE articles in the following volume are printed in the order in which they were written.

In quoting Scripture, both Catholic and Protestant divines, especially the latter, frequently confine themselves to a bare reference to chapter and verse. Out of the mass of readers, perhaps not one in a hundred follows out the reference by recurring to the Bible itself; and far smaller is the number of those whose memory would supersede the neces-

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sity of recurring. Thus to many readers the most valuable arguments are completely lost, or their force greatly diminished. I speak from actual experience of the injury and inconvenience produced by this system of defective reference. It will be seen that, in the following pages, I have studiously avoided this defect; that I have, in every instance, quoted as much of the text as I deemed necessary or useful for the purpose before me.

I am obliged to stop before the conclusion even of that portion of the Scripture argument for the Primacy, which is drawn from the single text of Matthew, in order that the volume may appear in due time. The rest of the Scripture argument, together with the *strongest* objections I can find in the writ-

ings of Protestant divines, especially English, will be continued in the next volume.

It has been signified to me, from various quarters, that "Irish Annual Miscellany" is a very unsuitable title for a series of this kind. I feel that it is so; that it is about the most infelicitous title that could have been chosen. It had been impressed upon me, or got into my head in some way, that a book consisting of purely theological matter, written in the severer style which becomes argumentative compositions, and with a corresponding title, would not take—would not sell—would not be read. Under this impression were the matter and form of the first volume wholly, and of the second partially, chosen. My opinion is now entirely changed; and

the judgment of several friends, on whose judgment I can securely rely, confirms the change. I have therefore chosen a new title; and new title pages are given for the preceding volumes as well as for the present. The old title page will also be given in the succeeding volumes, as it is in the present, for those whose convenience it may suit to continue it.

ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE, MAYNOOTH,  
DECEMBER, 21, 1851.

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### THEIR RESPECTIVE PROVINCES AND MUTUAL HARMONY.

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\* After line 19 page 101, add the following:—

“ 50. *Reason* is also often used in the sense of *argument* or *proof*; as when we say such or such a doctrine is established by such or such reasons, rests on such or such reasons, etc.”.

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[*To be continued*].

# **Infallibility of the Church of Christ.**

**DR. WHATELY'S ARGUMENT AGAINST IT EXAMINED.**



## Infallibility of the Church—Dr. Whately's Argument.

---

SOME time in the year 1847 Dr. Whately, the present Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, published a pamphlet, the title of which is given below,\* containing a somewhat new argument, urged with his accustomed ability and perspicuity, against the Catholic doctrine of the Infallibility of the Church of Christ. The argument appears to him decisive of the controversy between his Church and ours on this most important question. “This”, he says, “is a conclusion [viz., that no infallible and universally accessible interpreter does exist on Earth] which even the very words of Paul, which I have taken as a text, would be *alone fully sufficient to establish*” (page 22).

\* “The Search after Infallibility, considered in reference to the danger of religious errors arising within the Church in the primitive as well as in all later ages. Being a discourse delivered in the Cathedral of Christ Church, Dublin”, etc. A second edition appeared in 1848, and perhaps other editions since.

This pamphlet gave rise to some learned and able discussion, in which, however, it appeared to me that the specific objection or objections brought forward by Dr. Whately had been, perhaps from a persuasion of their relative unimportance, rather overlooked and merged in the more general examination of the question. Now, it is to these objections alone that I address myself in the present paper. I do not therefore propose to go into the general question in the way either of proof or reply. I do not propose to prove the infallibility: I confine myself to an examination of *Dr. Whately's* proofs *against it*, at least what is entirely new therein, or put forward in a new form.

The twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles contains the address of St. Paul to the ancients of the Churches of Miletus and Ephesus, immediately before his final departure from them. Towards the close of this address he thus admonishes them (I take Dr. Whately's version)—

“I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn

every one night and day with tears”—*Acts*, xx. 29, 30, 31.

On this text Dr. Whately finds his argument; which, so far as it comes against the Catholic doctrine, and is based on the text, is contained in the second section of the discourse. I shall therefore transcribe this section entire, together with so much of the preceding as may serve to lay open the connection of the author's ideas.

“Now it might seem wonderful, or even incredible, if we had not these records before us, that any such thing should have taken place; I mean, that in the very times of the Apostles themselves, whose authority from Heaven was attested by their miraculous powers, any false teachers should have not only arisen, but should have gained a hearing, and been able to draw away the disciples by pretending to an authority equal or superior to that of the genuine Apostles. And if we had not providentially possessed these records of the early dangers of the Church, we might have been disheartened or utterly thrown into despondency at the view of the various errors introduced in later times by men of high pretensions as religious teachers. We might have felt as if God had forsaken his Church when he withdrew from it the guidance of the inspired

Apostles, and left Christians to find their safety in vigilant and careful and candid examination of every doctrine taught. But, as it is, we see that, from the very first, this care and watchfulness were indispensably necessary to guard against the danger of false teachers introducing corruptions of the genuine Gospel. Strange and incredible as it may seem to us that any such men should have attempted, and should have succeeded in the attempt, to rival the Apostles, we are distinctly informed that so it was: and that Christians were then required to be on their guard against the grievous wolves in sheep's clothing, who would enter in not sparing the flock".

"II. And this leads me, in the second place, to the consideration of the way in which Paul tells his hearers to provide against the danger.

"Does he promise them that the *primitive* Church shall be safe from it?—that no inroads of error will take place for the first three or four centuries? On the contrary, he speaks of the danger as immediate.

"Or does he tell them that they will find their safety in apostolical succession?—that it is miraculously provided that no teacher shall ever mislead them, who has but been regularly ordained by himself, or by those appointed by him to succeed him in the office of ordaining? On the contrary,

he warns the Elders that even from the midst of their own Body,—of their own selves,—will arise men teaching a perverted Gospel to draw away the disciples after them.

“Or again, does he tell them that when any point of doubt and difficulty arises, they are to find safety in making a reference to Peter, and to those who shall be divinely appointed from time to time as his successors and representatives, for infallible decisions and directions? Not a word is said of any Apostle but himself; or of any one who should succeed him in the apostolic office. To himself, during his life, they would naturally apply by letter, if opportunity offered, for directions in any case of doubt that might arise. But not even any Apostle,—much less any successor of an Apostle,—is mentioned by Paul as the oracular guide, whom, after his own death, they were to consult.

“Or, does he bid them resort to some central Church,—whether at Jerusalem, or at Rome, or at Byzantium—and seek there for infallible guidance?\*

“Or does he direct them to summon a General

\* See the Remarks on the “Pillar and Ground of the Truth”, in Dr. Hind’s most valuable Tract on “Scripture and the Authorized Version”. There is a strong preponderance of probability in favour of his view (*Author’s note*).

Council, and refer every question that may arise to the decision of a majority of its votes; with a full assurance that these should be so supernaturally overruled by the Holy Spirit as to secure them from the possibility of error?

“No: he makes no allusion whatever to any other Church or Prelate; to any successor of Peter, or of the other Apostles; or to any infallible Council, as their guide. But he tells them to **TAKE HEED TO THEMSELVES** and to the flock they are set over; he tells them to ‘watch’; and he exhorts them to remember his own earnest warnings to them.

“Now, if there *had* been provided by the Most High, any such safeguard as I have alluded to,—if Paul had known of any order of men, any Prelate, any particular Church, or General Council, designed by Providence as an infallible guide, and a sure remedy against errors and corruptions, would he not have been sure, on such an occasion as this, to have given notice of it to his hearers? If, when he fore-saw a perilous navigation for the vessel of the Church, he had known of a safe port, just at hand, and readily accessible, is it credible that he would have never alluded to it, but have left them exposed to the storms? Would he have been, in that case, ‘pure’,—as he declares he was,—‘from the blood

of all men'? Can any one seriously think, that against the dangers which he had been warning them of, and weeping over, for three years, he knew of a complete safeguard, and yet was so wanting in his duty,—so careless of their well being,—as never to make the slightest mention of anything of the kind? To suppose this would be to suppose him destitute not only of all faithfulness in his high office, but of common prudence and rationality.

"And yet if any such provision really had been made by the Author of our faith, it is utterly inconceivable that the Apostle Paul should have been,—and that too on such an occasion as this,—left in utter ignorance of its existence. Whatever may be the precise meaning of our Lord's promise, '*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*', it is at least perfectly clear what it could *not* mean: it could not relate to something either unknown to Paul, or kept back by him from his hearers. All that he knew, and that it was for their benefit to learn, he had, as he solemnly declares, taught to them; and this was no less, he assures them, than '*the whole counsel and design of God*'. '*I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take*

heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears'.

"From all this we may learn, among other things, how great is the mistake of those who are satisfied to trace up some doctrine or practice not countenanced by Scripture, to a very early period; to what they call the Primitive Church; and consider this as establishing a divine sanction for what may have been, after all, one of the 'perverse things' introduced by false teachers, and against which Paul so earnestly warned the Elders".

Before I proceed to the examination of these passages there is one remark which I wish to premise.

Dr. Whately maintains that there is a "powerful principle in human nature", which he calls "*the craving for infallibility* in religious matters" (page

14). In a previous work,\* still more distinctly than in the present, he assigns this “craving, this natural predisposition to look out for, and implicitly trust, an infallible guide”, as the “true cause” of our belief in the existence of such a guide. So strong, according to him, is this tendency of the human mind, that the belief of the whole Catholic world in the infallibility of the Church—a belief as firm as in any other article of faith—has actually originated not in any mistaken interpretation of the promises of Christ as contained in the Scriptures, but in this very tendency. We did not, according to him, first draw our doctrine from the Scriptures misinterpreted; but, after it had, from the aforesaid natural cause, grown up among us, we then “looked for the best confirmation of it (however weak) that Scripture could be made to afford”.

I am not at present disputing the fact that such a tendency exists, or the intrinsic probability (of extrinsic evidence none has been advanced) of its having produced so wonderful a result. I am only stating Dr. Whately's doctrine.

There is another doctrine which Dr. Whately professes not as a private theory or a theological

\* “Errors of Romanism”, Essay IV., Sect. 3, p. 196, second edition.

inference, but as a fundamental article of what, in opposition to the Tractarians, he holds to be the only true and genuine Protestant faith. I allude to the doctrine of the all-sufficiency of Scripture. It is the sole rule of faith. It contains all, whether in the way of doctrine or general moral precept, that is necessary to be believed or followed—all that is necessary to make man wise unto salvation.

Now, if this theory of the sufficiency of Scripture be true, and if the temptation to admit an infallible authority be such as Dr. Whately describes it, then no light presumption would exist that a specific admonition against a danger so imminent—so deeply rooted in human nature—so peculiarly, because of its own nature, permanently, and incurably, fatal to sound doctrine—would have been given by our Lord or his apostles, and would have been pretty clearly recorded in Scripture. The presumption becomes infinitely stronger when we consider that there is a number of passages in both the Old and New Testaments, which (I take for granted, Dr. Whately would admit) seem, at first sight, to imply something very like what we call infallibility. Such are those texts of the prophecies in which the Church of the New Law is represented as for ever

so pure and glorious, ever finally triumphant over all her enemies, ever beloved of God and protected by him. Still more distinct and emphatic are the passages of the New Testament, wherein it is said that the invisible enemies of the Church should never prevail against her (*Matt.*, xvi. 18); where our Lord promises to be with his Church all days, that is permanently, without ever deserting her for a single moment, even to the end of the world (*ibid.*, xxviii. 20); where he promises that the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, shall be given to the apostles, and be with them, and abide *in* them *for ever*, and teach them *all* things, and recall to their memory *all* things which *he had revealed* (*John*, xiv. 16, 26—xvi. 13); where the inspired apostle calls the Church the pillar and the prop of truth (*I. Tim.*, iii. 15), etc.

I am not now asserting (though I firmly believe) that these texts prove the infallibility. All I assert is, that they furnish some very plausible grounds for that doctrine. Taking this therefore into account, together with the danger arising from “the craving after infallibility”, a very strong presumption arises that, according to the Protestant doctrine on the sufficiency of Scripture, some corrective should have been furnished in some part of the sacred

volume. As the texts of the Old Testament, which seem to promise a temporal king in the Messias, are sufficiently explained by the many striking passages which clearly foretell a suffering Messias, and which therefore (especially when joined with the evidences furnished by the Gospel) compel us to interpret the pictures of temporal glory and power as but types, sensible and earthly images of the spiritual kingdom which is not of this world.

Of course I do not insist on the preceding as if it *proved* any thing decisively: only as Dr. Whately is so very much given to this sort of presumptive *a priori* reasoning (I mean *a priori* in reference to dogmatic proof), it is not useless to show that we too are not wanting in presumptive arguments. But I am delaying too long from the examination of his argument on the text of St. Paul—a text which, I suppose, he would say furnishes precisely the required corrective. Let us see.

## I.

The argument may, for facility of examination, be put in the following form—

If Christ had established any infallible authority

on Earth for defining articles of faith and settling controversies, St. Paul (to whom, of course, such an institution would have been known) would surely have referred thereto as a means, or *the* means, of overcoming the dangers which he warns against. Nor would he have confined himself to exhorting the elders to watch over themselves and their flock, to remember his own earnest warnings, etc., as if these were their only means of safety. But St. Paul does not say one word about such authority; on the contrary, he confines himself to the exhortations just stated. Therefore no such infallible authority was established.

## ANSWER.

I deny the two first propositions; and, in direct and absolute contradiction to them, I assert that, supposing an infallible authority to have been established, in the *first* place, St. Paul was in no way called upon to refer to it as a security against the evils described by him, and that he did point out the only real means of security; that, in the *second* place, it would have been idle and beside his purpose to refer to it; and that, in the *third* place, such reference would have been in the highest degree inexpedient and pernicious.

*First.* The object of the apostle's address in no way required that he should make any reference whatever to the infallible teaching of the Church.

It is plain from the repeated assertions of St. Paul that those whom he was addressing had received from him full instruction in the whole body of the Christian doctrine, and in the economy of the Christian dispensation. He tells them, “I have kept back *nothing* that was profitable,\* but have preached to you and taught you from house to house.....Wherefore I take you to witness this day, that I am clear from the blood of *all*: for I have not spared to declare unto you *all the counsel of God*†.....Therefore watch, keeping in memory, that for three years I ceased not with tears to admonish *every one of you* night and day”‡ (20, 26, 27, 31). They therefore had no need to recur to an infallible tribunal to learn for the first time what they had not known before, or to learn more fully and distinctly what they had previously received but partially and obscurely. St. Paul had taught every one of them—taught them night and day, through their houses, for three years—had

\* Οὐδεν ὑπεστειλαμην τῶν συμφεροντῶν.

† Πασαν τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ.

‡ Νοιθετῶν ἔνα εκαστον.

taught them the whole counsel of God; withheld nothing that was profitable. The instruction was perfect; their knowledge was complete; they needed no further teaching from any tribunal, fallible or infallible.

The case then which St. Paul contemplates, was not that of danger from their ignorance or want of information, still less from "any point of doubt or difficulty arising" as to what was or was not taught by him; that is, as to what was or was not revealed doctrine.

This is made, if possible, still plainer by the words in which he describes the very case, and the *only* case, he contemplates. Their danger was from "ravelling wolves", from men "not sparing the flock", from men "speaking perverse things", and trying thereby "to draw disciples after them". Mark his words: "Take heed therefore to yourselves and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost has placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. *For I know this, that after my departure ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock.* And of your own selves shall rise men speaking *perverse things* to draw away disciples after them. *Therefore watch*", etc. (v. 28, etc.).

That is to say, the danger was from undisguised heretics and schismatics, endeavouring to corrupt their faith [“speaking perverse things”], and to break the unity of the Church [“to draw disciples after them”].

This was the enemy they had to combat. How then were they to meet and defeat him? By flying to an infallible church, an infallible council, or an infallible see? For what purpose? To learn the true doctrine, to learn whether they were to embrace the perverse teaching? But all this they had already learned, and learned from an infallible Apostle. They had received the whole counsel of God, each one of them; nothing had been withheld. No authority on Earth—Pope, Council, or Church Universal—could teach more fully, more accurately, more surely.

They already *possessed* the treasure of sound doctrine. The danger to which they were afterwards to be exposed, and of which the Apostle forewarns them, was the danger of *losing* this treasure. Their duty was to *preserve* it. And now I assert, that the means pointed out by St. Paul were *the* means and the *sole* means of fulfilling this duty: the means whereby Christian bishops and other pastors through all time are to protect themselves and

their flocks against the assaults of heresy and schism. Another infallible authority could only repeat and evolve the instructions here laid down. Listen:

“*I have not spared to declare unto you all the counsel of God*”. You have now the whole body of Christian doctrine from a divinely commissioned and infallible authority: you require not now to seek any more, to be taught over again.

“*Ravelling wolves will enter in among you*”, etc. When I am gone, the unity and faith of the Church will be assailed among you. I warn you of the danger. As the homely proverb has it: *Forewarned, forearmed*.

“*Take heed to yourselves—watch*”. What mean these weighty words? What means Christian watching against the snares and attacks of the Devil and his ministers? It is not as the watching for an indifferent event, as for an eclipse of the moon or the arrival of a pageant. It is watching for the coming of an enemy, who, if he finds you unprepared to resist him, will capture and slay you. It is a practical watching; a watching with your spiritual armour on; a watching in faith and humility and prayer and the practice of all virtues—for by such weapons only are *these* “ravelling wolves” defeated. You need not run here or run

there to look for the truth of Christ: you have received it from me: it is within you: keep it, and these are the means of keeping it: *Take heed to yourselves—watch.*

*"I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, who is able to bind up"*, etc. God's grace will strengthen you to overcome the dangers I foretell: ask it: adopt the means of securing it: trust in it.

*"Keeping in memory"*, etc. For three years have I laboured among you, teaching every one of you, teaching all the counsel of God. Forget not my labours and instructions: keep them before your minds: in the recollection thereof you will see the deformity of perverse teaching, and fly from it.

*"Take heed.....to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath appointed you bishops to rule the Church".* You are the pastors of the people. It is the duty of pastors to watch over the flock, to protect them. Your pastoral vigilance is a divinely appointed means of saving them from the inroads of heresy and from all sin.

If, in our own day, St. Paul were to come down on Earth to warn the bishops of any country against approaching trials, *e. g.* against a new heresy on the

divinity of our Lord, what fuller and more apposite instruction could he give them, than he gave at Ephesus—even in the hypothesis of a permanent infallible authority? Should he direct them to address themselves to that authority? For what purpose? To teach them more clearly and surely the divinity of Christ? But this they, by the hypothesis of the case, already know and believe most firmly; as the ancients at Ephesus knew and believed most firmly all the counsel of God. To settle a controversy? But, by the hypothesis, there is no controversy except the deadly controversy between the Church and heresy; as the controversy foretold by St. Paul was to be only between the Church on one hand and the ravening wolves on the other. To teach them how to preserve the orthodox faith in themselves and their flocks? But no infallible church need be consulted to learn this. St. Paul has given the lesson once for all. Not he alone, nor he on this occasion only. It is written in the plainest characters on every page of the gospel—“*Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation*”. It is in every catechism: it is one of the simple elements of Christian morals: it is a Christian “household word”: children learn it with the first rudiments of faith. No new appeal

to infallible authority is necessary for Christian bishops to learn it. Yet *it* is all that is necessary for them to know, and for all to know, in order to overcome the dangers foretold by St. Paul.

In a word, the function of infallible authority as such is to preserve, define, propose, teach sound doctrine, and proscribe erroneous doctrine. They already possessed the whole of the sound doctrine in its purity. The danger to which they were to be exposed was that of falling away from the truth, of losing the grace of faith. That grace is to be preserved like every other, by avoiding the occasion of sin, by watching and prayer, and pastoral supervision. These are the means established by God, and no other.

This is enough. It is therefore evident, in the *first* place, that, supposing a perpetual infallible tribunal to have been established, St. Paul was in no way called upon to refer those whom he was addressing to such tribunal, or to any tribunal whatever, as a preservative against the perils described by him.

*Secondly.* From what has been said, it is equally evident that it would have been idle and impertinent in St. Paul to have made any such reference. For recourse to an infallible tribunal is not the

means, nor in any way a part of the means, of overcoming the dangers in question.

*Thirdly.* Such reference would have been not only useless, but positively pernicious.

For 1° As recourse to a new judgment of the infallible tribunal is not a means of overcoming the danger, to refer thereto, for such a purpose, would have been to turn men's attention from the true means of meeting and subduing temptation, to false and inefficient means. It would be like recommending the officers of a beleaguered garrison to send a deputation to the Queen in parliament assembled, to know whether they should desert to the enemy. They require no authority to tell them that their duty is to fight the enemy and beat him back, but in no case to desert to him. Or it would be as if one, after telling a traveller that there are wolves in the quarter he is entering, and after describing the animal's appearance so minutely that there is no possibility of mistaking it, should conclude by saying: "You will surely meet 'ravelling wolves' on your journey; and when you do meet them, I would counsel you to send your servant to a competent judge in the next village, to know whether the animal is really a wolf and really mischievous". Meantime the wolves pour down

and kill all before them. The true advice would be: "Keep a sharp lookout over yourself and your attendants, and trust to the accuracy of your aim and the goodness of your rifle"—*Take heed: watch.*

2° Such reference would imply that a new sentence or definition of the infallible authority was needed. That is, it would imply a direct contradiction to St. Paul's own repeated assertions, that he had communicated to them the fulness of divine truth.

It may be said that, although the generation of ancients addressed by St. Paul had been fully instructed, and, inasmuch as the sure means of preserving the knowledge thus communicated were pointed out to them, they could not, without grievously sinful neglect, ever after lose any part of the deposit of faith; yet, in after times, under the pressure of persecution or from other causes, the knowledge of men might become imperfect, and doubts and difficulties might arise, that would require the intervention of an infallible tribunal to settle, if such tribunal existed.

To this I answer, 1° Though the warnings and instructions of the Apostle are in their general sense applicable to all times and places, yet the specific danger which he here foretells is manifestly one that

was to occur not long after. For he says, “*after my departure* ravening wolves will enter in”; a form of words which could not with propriety be used to designate a far distant event. And he immediately adds, as if to impress on them more strongly the proximity of the evil, “*And of your own selves* shall arise men speaking perverse things”. We learn accordingly from his epistles to Timothy, who was at the time bishop of Ephesus, that these “ravening wolves” did actually appear during that generation and very soon after his own departure. “Having faith and a good conscience, which some rejecting have made shipwreck concerning the faith. Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander”, etc.—I. *Tim.*, i. 19, 20. “Thou knowest this that all they who are in Asia, are turned away from me; of whom are Phigellus and Hermogenes”—II. *Tim.*, i. 15. St. Paul *might have* contemplated a general case, the general fortunes of the Church in after ages: but he *did not* contemplate except a particular case, and shaped his admonitions accordingly.

From the fact just established, a fresh, distinct, unanswerable argument presents itself against Dr. Whately's proof, which may be thus briefly stated.

An infallible authority, namely that of St. Paul and the other Apostles, was actually living, speaking,

teaching, defining, at the very time when the dangers foretold by St. Paul were to occur and did occur. But St. Paul does not refer to this infallible authority as a means of providing against those dangers. Therefore he did not think it necessary to refer to an infallible authority, though existing, as a means of providing against those dangers.

2<sup>o</sup>. St. Paul, as I have already shown, is not contemplating the case of *bona fide* doubts and disputes within the Church. He was therefore in no way called upon to prescribe what was to be done in such case. The case before him was altogether different; his instructions are confined to it.

More might be said, but let this suffice. Dr. Whately's palmary argument, therefore, from the silence of the Apostle, so far from being "alone fully sufficient to establish" \* the fallibility of the Church, leaves that dogma quite untouched, has no force whatever against it, of any kind, in any degree.

I shall now proceed to notice some of Dr. Whately's incidental arguments.

## II.

"We might have felt as if God had forsaken his

\* "The Search", etc., p. 22.

Church when he withdrew from it the guidance of the inspired Apostles, and left Christians to find their safety in *vigilant and careful and candid examination of every doctrine taught*. But, as it is, we see that, from the very first, this care and watchfulness were indispensably necessary to guard against the danger of false teachers introducing corruptions of the genuine gospel" (p. 8).

Here it is implied, or rather asserted, that the right and duty of private judgment, as commonly understood by Protestants, are enunciated by the apostle or inferred from his language. Now in St. Paul's discourse I see nothing whatever of Christians finding their safety in the examination of every doctrine taught, or in the examination of any doctrine at all. I see nothing whatever of the right or duty of Christians examining doctrine.

1. St. Paul is addressing the "ancients of the Church", the rulers whom the Holy Ghost had appointed to govern the Church (v. 17, 28). Now, what doctrines had they to examine? The doctrines taught by St. Paul? But these they had already received on his authority, and received too without any examination of them. The evidences of his divine mission they might have

examined and tested, so far as was necessary to produce a reasonable conviction that he really was divinely commissioned. This once established, they were bound to accept his teaching with simple and unquestioning faith. Were they to examine the doctrine of the false teachers? But these surely they were not to examine, but to reject at once. The fact that the doctrines were new, were opposed to the teaching of the apostle, was quite enough. In short, there is nothing in the discourse about examining doctrines.

2. But suppose that he had exhorted them to examine the doctrines propounded by the false teachers. In the first place, it would not follow that therefore the body of the faithful were bound, or authorized, or competent to undertake such examination. In the second place, by what standard should those doctrines be examined, *i. e.* their truth tested? By the standard of scripture? But there is not the slightest allusion to any such standard of inquiry. It is plain from what have been already quoted of the apostle's words, that the standard by which they were to test all future teaching was to be his own teaching, the counsel of God communicated by him, as living in their memories and traditions. Such exami-

nation (if it can be so called) was certainly their duty; but between this and examination on the Protestant principle of private judgment the difference is wide indeed.

3. Dr. Whately has evidently been led astray by a careless inspection (as he would say himself) of the words of St. Paul, "Take heed", "Watch". They were certainly warned to look sharply—to *themselves* and *their flock*; to watch, keeping in memory his labours and instructions. What this kind of watching and *self*-examination implies has been already explained.

4. Christians then were not "to find their safety in vigilant and careful and candid examination of every doctrine taught", but in the vigilant and careful superintendence of the *pastors* over *them*. So that this discourse, if it contains any reference to the doctrine of private judgment, is decidedly adverse thereto. It places the safety of the flock against the inroads of error, *not* in private judgment, but in the right government of the pastors. Indeed, on the principle of Dr. Whately's argument, it furnishes a conclusive proof against private judgment. For if Christians are to find their safety in the examination of every doctrine taught, St. Paul

would, on the present occasion, have pointed out this means. Now, he not only makes no mention thereof, but distinctly and expressly inculcates the duty of pastoral vigilance as the means. Therefore private judgment, or the examination by the faithful of every doctrine taught, is not the means of safety: but, on the contrary, pastoral vigilance and superintendence is one of the means.

### III.

“I call it ‘a craving for infallibility’ (although hardly any one is found in words claiming, or expecting to be, personally infallible), because it is evident that he who is infallibly following an infallible guide, is himself infallible. If his decisions on each point coincide exactly with those of an authority which is exempt from error, that *his* decisions are exempt from error is not only an undeniable, but almost an identical proposition;—it is as plain as that things which are equal to the same are equal to each other.

“But this, though self-evident as soon as stated, is sometimes lost sight of in practice. A man will speak of himself as being fallible, and as having no expectation of being otherwise. But his meaning must be (supposing him quite certain that he has an

infallible guide, always accessible, and to which he constantly conforms),—his meaning must be, that he *would* be fallible if left to himself; that his exemption from the possibility of error is not inherent, but derived. But actually and practically he does consider himself infallible.

“Though the gnomon of a sun-dial has no power in itself to indicate the hour, yet when the sun shines on it, the motions of its shadow must be as correct as those of the sun’s rays which it follows. And, in like manner, *he* is infallible, practically, in his belief, who always believes exactly what an infallible Church or leader believes” (p. 14).

There are several mistakes here, arising, as appears to me, partly from Dr. Whately’s not knowing or not keeping before his mind what we understand by the word *Infallibility* when applied to the Church, and partly from his confounding this meaning of the word with that which it commonly bears in popular language.

1. If in ordinary conversation I am asked, “Are you sure that it was Dr. Whately you saw yesterday in Stephen’s Green?” and answer, “I could not be mistaken, I am infallibly certain that it was he”: all that I mean by this is that I have the usual evidences that beget a physical certainty

in such cases. So in like manner if I assert in similar form a proposition resting on moral or metaphysical evidence. What I mean in all such assertions is, that I have absolute certainty, physical, moral, or metaphysical, as the case may be, of the truth of what I say.

But when I speak of the infallibility of the Church, I understand something very different from this. For I then mean that the Church is assisted and controlled by an extraordinary and *supernatural* guidance of God, so that she *cannot ever* err in defining articles of faith, etc.

Suppose that an infallible authority exists, and that I have clear and sure proof of its existence, and that I accordingly submit to it and believe in it; suppose that I have evidence that such or such a doctrine has been defined by that authority, and that I accordingly believe that doctrine, then I am sure that my belief agrees with its teaching: I am following an infallible authority: I am *certainly* following it, but *not infallibly*. I have the certainty of faith that what is taught by this authority as revealed, is revealed; but I am not infallible. I hope to make all this very plain by some further observations.

2. The Church of Christ, we believe, infallibly

follows an infallible guide (namely, the Spirit ever abiding with her and directing her), and is therefore infallible. And we believe that the Church infallibly follows this guide, because the word of God so teaches. But no individual has received this promise: no individual, who has not received a special revelation to that effect, can be infallibly sure that he will persevere to the end in the true faith any more than in any other virtue. He believes to-day every word which the infallible Church teaches; and he believes so firmly that he is ready to seal his faith with his blood. But he may fall away from grace, and rebel against the Church which he formerly believed infallible, and become a heretic, and die in his heresy. The promise which secures her from error will not secure him, for it has not been made to him. Who would assert that Luther, for example, while he believed in the infallibility of the Church, and received her teaching with unquestioning assent, should, in consistency, be considered by Catholics as all the time *infallibly* following an infallible guide?

The Catholic idea of faith undoubtedly involves (as I may probably explain in another part of the

the present volume) the most firm assent, resting on grounds so sure as to exclude every rational apprehension of mistake; the mind, fortified by divine grace, being ready to encounter any extremity rather than voluntarily waver for a single moment. Stronger assent there cannot be, in the present stage of our existence, than this, while it lasts. But man is still free; grace may be abused; and the mind may reject as false what it previously held to with a belief so strong. The assent is sure; but it may fail; and what may fail is not infallible.

3. A man therefore who follows an infallible church does not infallibly follow it; for he has no divine promise that he will always follow it, and this is necessary in order that he should be said infallibly to follow it. There is another reason why those who hold the infallibility of the Church, and follow, what they believe to be, this infallible Church, are not thereby constrained to hold that they infallibly follow it.

An infallible Church, by the very terms, cannot through ignorance or any other cause teach any doctrinal error. But an individual may fall into involuntary error without ceasing to be a sound member of the Church. Even learned theologians may err without the least sin against faith. For

while the whole revelation entrusted to the infallible Church is for ever preserved by her untainted and unmutilated, individual members may through inculpable ignorance think the doctrine on certain points to be different from what it is. They are still prepared to receive her definition, whatever it be, when notified to them, and they believe firmly whatever she holds, though through mistake they think that she holds such or such doctrines which are really different from what she does hold. They err, and therefore are not infallible, though they follow all the while the infallible Church—that is, they are her docile children, and receive all her teaching with blind obedience, so far as it is known to them.

Perhaps this may be made still plainer by one brief observation. There are some doctrines which all the faithful are bound to believe explicitly, that is, as formally and in themselves presented to the mind, *e. g.* the existence of God, the Trinity, the atonement of Christ, etc. There are other doctrines which they are not bound to believe explicitly, but only implicitly, by believing whatever the Church teaches as revealed doctrine. The former they are bound to *know*; the latter they are not bound to know. In the principle of both these assertions Dr.

Whately himself would, I suppose, agree. For, on one hand, it is clearly a duty to know and explicitly believe certain leading doctrines of religion: and, on the other hand, there are innumerable propositions, historical and of other kinds, in the Old and New Testaments, which, though all alike revealed and God's own word, it is as clearly not a common duty of Christians to know, and therefore not a common duty of Christians to believe explicitly—otherwise it would be a duty of every Christian to know the whole contents of the Bible. Of course every Christian is bound to be very cautious in hazarding doctrinal assertions, without first ascertaining whether they are in accordance with the Church's teaching. Still, after using all the moral diligence in his power, he may mistake her teaching, without ceasing in the least to be her faithful child. “Errare possum”, said one of the Fathers, “haereticus esse nolo”.

4. But see the absurdity to which Dr. Whately's reasoning leads. I suppose that he holds the infallibility of the Apostles in their public teaching, at least the infallibility of the body in its collective capacity. Here there was a living infallible tribunal. Wherefore the early Christians, who all believed on the authority of the Apostles, and had

as clear evidence as it is possible for man to have, that such and such doctrines were taught by them —each one of all these early Christians infallibly followed an infallible guide, and therefore each one was infallible. For the same reason, all who followed them were individually infallible; and so on down to the present day—an extent of infallibility which, according to us, it would be simple heresy to assert.\* Thus then we might reason on Dr. Whately's principle.

“He who is infallibly following an infallible guide is himself infallible”—[*Dr. Whately's words.*]

But the early Christians, who were taught by the Apostles, infallibly followed an infallible guide. [Certainly as much so as any Catholic pretends to be following the infallible Church.]

Therefore the early Christians were infallible, etc.

Dr. Whately confounds infallibility with certainty. It is true to say that he who is certainly following an infallible authority, is so far certain; or he who follows an infallible authority has an infallible certainty that what he believes on its teaching is true. But to have an infallible certainty

\* It is heresy to hold the infallibility even of a National Council. Constit. *Auctorem Fidei*, prop. 85.

is not to be infallible. Dr. Whately has an infallible certainty that God exists, but he is not infallible.

“If his decisions on each point coincide exactly with those of an authority which is exempt from error, that *his* decisions are exempt from error is not only an undeniably, but almost an identical proposition”.

1. He is not absolutely sure that his decisions on *each* point coincide with those of the infallible authority. There may be many points on which no decision is yet given, or of which, if given, he may be ignorant.

2. “His decisions are exempt from error”, *i. e.* what he is sure the infallible authority has defined, he is sure is true. Granted. *He* is *exempt* from error, *i. e.* he cannot err. Denied. For he may the next moment yield to the temptation of the father of lies, and reject the decision.

“Though the gnomon of a sun-dial”, etc. (*ut supra*).

The motions of the shadow *must* follow the sun’s rays. The motions of man’s will are not constrained to follow the teaching of the infallible Church. For man is a free agent and *not* a sun-dial.

“In like manner, he is infallible, practically, in

his belief, who always believes exactly what an infallible Church or leader believes".

1. He is not sure that he knows the doctrine of the infallible Church *exactly* on *all* points.

2. He who always believes with the infallible Church is always *right* in his belief. He who has (and who has?) a *revealed promise from God* that he always will believe exactly what the infallible Church believes, is *infallible* in his belief. Otherwise he is fallible, and may hereafter become a heretic.

#### IV.

"I have said that the non-existence of such an infallible interpreter as I have been alluding to, is what an intelligent man might be convinced of even by the very passage in the Book of Acts that is before us;—by the absence of any reference or allusion to anything of the kind, in a discourse of the Apostle Paul's, in which he could not have failed to mention it, had it existed. But there are many other considerations from which the same conclusion follows.

"1. For instance, the incompetency of men in general to exercise a correct judgment on questions pertaining to religion, is the main argument from

which is inferred the necessity of an infallible interpreter. And yet this very argument destroys the ultimate conclusion maintained. For it presupposes that men *are* fit to decide, by their own judgment, that most difficult question, as to the claim of any particular Church, Party, or Person to *be* that interpreter. Certain passages of Scripture are alleged as implying that a certain Church is the infallible guide appointed by Providence to supersede our private judgment, which is incapable of deciding aright as to the meaning of Scripture. But how am I to know that such is the true sense of those passages? If we *are* competent to judge of their meaning, then our alleged unfitness for judging, and the necessity thence inferred, are done away. If we are *not* competent to judge of the meaning of any doubtful passages, then, though we may admit the necessity of an unerring interpreter, we can be never sure that we have found one.

"If,—which I believe is practically the commonest procedure,—we interpret those passages in conformity with the decision of our supposed infallible guide, and, in implicit reliance on that, we are palpably begging the question,—first assuming the infallibility of our guide, and by means of that assumption proceeding to prove it" (pp. 24, 26).

## ANSWER.

I deny the first proposition in the foregoing argument, viz., that the incompetency of men in general to exercise a correct judgment on questions pertaining to religion, is the *main* argument for the necessity of an infallible interpreter.

1. In truth, the aforesaid incompetency is not only not the main argument, but *per se* is no argument at all. For it should also be proved that God is bound, or in his own gratuitous mercy has promised, to remedy this incompetency; and then that he is bound, or has promised, to remedy it by means of an infallible tribunal. We do not hold that an infallible authority is in every case necessary in order that a man should make an act of divine faith. Nor, even where an infallible authority is established, do we hold it necessary that individuals should always receive the doctrine from that authority *as infallible (sub hoc concepta, as the schoolmen would say).*\*

2. There is an argument however from man's

\* A full exposition of all this, besides being unnecessary for the question immediately before us, would extend to an inconvenient length, and probably embarrass the controversy with Dr. Whately. See DE LUGO, de Fide, D. 1, n. 250; SUAREZ, D. 3, s. 10; STAPLETON, Principia, L. 8, c. 3; KILBER, P. 1, c. 3, art. 3, etc., etc.

“incompetency”, joined with other facts, and which I believe to be decisive and unanswerable; it is this: Christ established a Church (*a*) which he intended to last to the end of the world: (*b*) he moreover *promised* this perpetual duration to his Church: (*c*) he intended that this Church should be spread, and his revelation preached “to the ends of the Earth”, that is, that the Church should be Catholic in extent; he also promised this Catholicity—but the intention is enough for me at present: (*d*) he also intended that the revelation should be preserved pure and one throughout this Church to the end of the world: (*e*) the doctrines contained in this revelation are numerous, and of these some are entirely above the comprehension of the human mind—pure mysteries; many are deep, and, to mere reason, startling and perplexing; and all are more or less opposed to man’s natural and corrupt inclinations. Now an infinitely wise being must furnish the necessary means of effecting what he wills and designs and commands to be effected. But considering the tendencies of human nature, our proneness to dogmatize and disagree, and form or follow parties, especially in matters of religious faith, above all in speculative and mysterious doctrines of religion; I say it is impossible that such a body of doctrine could be preserved, in all its unity,

through such vast varieties of the human race, to the very end of the world, without a permanent extraordinary assistance from above—which we call infallibility. Nay, it is impossible that it could be so preserved for a single generation, aye for a single year.

I beg the reader to bear in mind that I am not proving the infallibility. I only give such hints of this proof as to convey an idea of the sort of proof it is; that it is not a mere argument from man's incompetency—which is all I am now asserting against Dr. Whately.

3. I have no doubt that the preceding argument, properly developed, is conclusive: but it is not our main argument. Our main argument is in the express and repeated declarations contained in the word of God both written and unwritten.

I deny the second proposition in Dr. Whately's argument, and the proof immediately following in support of it. The objection (which, by the way, was proposed by Protestant, and answered by Catholic, divines before the days of Bellarmine) involves two points of difficulty to the Catholic reasoner, and may be thus more closely stated: If men are incompetent to judge of the meaning of Scripture, they must be incompetent, in the first

place, to determine as to the true and sure meaning of certain passages of that same Scripture, that Christ has endowed his Church with infallibility; and, in the second place, to determine which of the various Churches claiming to be Christian is that one infallible Church. But Catholics hold the doctrine of men's incompetency to judge of the meaning of Scripture: therefore they cannot, on their own principles, be sure that the Church is infallible, or which is the true Church. Or the objection may be thus stated, *e converso*: If men are capable of determining from Scripture with certainty that the Church is infallible, and of determining which is the infallible Church, then they are competent to judge of the meaning of Scripture. But Catholics profess to be able to determine these two things—and, of course, without supposing the infallibility, which is the thing to be discovered or demonstrated. Therefore, etc.

I shall consider the objection in this latter shape.

*First*, I deny the first proposition.

1. It does not follow that, because one particular doctrine is so clearly revealed in Scripture, that men possessing the ordinary qualifications, moral and intellectual, are able to discover it therein with certainty; therefore they are able to discover other

doctrines there; still less that they are able to discover *the whole body of Christian doctrine* there, to determine that such and such are revealed, and such and such are not revealed doctrines, but opposed thereto, and to determine this with *certainty*, or even with solid probability. Yet this is precisely Dr. Whately's argument, or, at least, a principle *essential* to the validity of his argument..

The doctrine of the divine mission of our Lord—of the eternity of Heaven—of the existence of angels—of the authority of the apostles to preach the gospel—of the mercy of God in forgiving sins to the truly penitent, etc., etc., are so clearly revealed in Scripture, that we require no infallible interpreter to tell us that they are there. But it does not follow that, for example, the most important doctrines regarding grace and election, contained in the epistle to the Romans, are so clear from the language of that great apostle, of whose writings St. Peter said that in them “are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction”. The Scriptures were written at different times, on different occasions, by different persons, to different classes of people, and, what is above all to be noted, on a

great variety of subjects, of which some would be of course more difficult of comprehension than others; so that, from the very nature of the case, we should expect that some portions of them would be less easy to understand than others, and some doctrines more clearly stated than others. Nor let it be said that what is obscure in one place is cleared up in another. For (to omit other replies) this is the point to be proved. I would ask in what other parts of Scripture are the accumulated and exceeding great difficulties of the epistle to the Romans cleared up?

2. The idea of an infallible authority is one which the mind feels no great difficulty in comprehending. In its general form, as regards doctrine, it simply means that the Church will never profess or teach error. There is nothing mysterious or particularly difficult in the simple conception of this. Nay more, according to Dr. Whately's own view, the actual establishment of such an authority rather falls in with our antecedent expectations and our notions of what God would do. Now, if a doctrine of this description were at all expressed in Scripture, men would, from the very nature of the case, see it therein far more quickly and distinctly and surely, than if it were a doctrine that thwarted and

confounded our previous notions, and tasked our faith more strongly, and silenced our reason more imperatively, such as the real presence, or transubstantiation, or the Trinity, or the divinity of our Lord. And therefore it does not follow, that, because they are competent to find *it* there, they are equally competent to find *them* there.

3. But there is another and far stronger reason why the Infallibility of the Church would be more easily discoverable by the mass of men than other doctrines. For, in the hypothesis that such an authority was established (and no one can doubt the *possibility* of this), there would be no necessity for going elsewhere—to Scripture or Fathers,—to learn all the doctrines of revelation. The existence of an infallible teaching Church would supersede the necessity of searching from any other quarter. It would be the universal and accessible organ of communicating divine truth. To it all should have recourse, and to it only would it be necessary to have recourse. Consequently, in the record of God's word, its establishment should be traced clearly for the mass of men. But this once done, there would be no necessity for unfolding other doctrines with equal clearness to them. For, these doctrines they are not to learn from that record, but

from the infallible interpreter. Thus, suppose an absolute sovereign to have drawn up a code of laws for a particular province: and suppose that he has invested his representative with absolute irresponsible authority to publish, interpret, and enforce those laws. The commission of the vicegerent should be established in the first place and beyond all reasonable doubt. This having been effected, the people must learn the law from him, and not from the code: for, in the hypothesis, it is not what they gather from the code, but his interpretation thereof, which constitutes the law. But, in truth, to attempt to illustrate this matter from human institutions, existing or conceivable, is, I fear, only to darken it. For there is nothing among fallible mortals like to the infallible Church.

What has been said of the necessity of a clear revelation of the existence of the infallible authority, applies also to the marks whereby men will be enabled to discover the body in which the authority resides.

4. I have said that the infallibility of the Church should be contained with sufficient clearness in “the record of God’s word”. I have intentionally avoided the word “Scripture”, or written inspired record. For when I say that the doctrine

must be clearly revealed, I cannot therefore say that it must be clearly revealed in Scripture—as if Scripture were the only record of God's word; which I, as a Catholic, of course deny. The question, however, of the *depository* of revelation need not be opened here: for, as I have said, certain doctrines *are* clearly revealed in Scripture; and the doctrine of the Infallibility is one of these.

Dr. Whately will of course deny this. In truth, every one who holds the inspiration of Scripture, must consequently hold that whatever doctrine he rejects is not only not clearly contained, but is not contained at all in it. Hence, Arians say that the divinity of Christ is not revealed in Scripture; Socinians say that there is no mystery whatever there; etc., etc. Texts are not doubtful because their meaning has been disputed even by learned and able men; otherwise there is hardly one text, if even one, the meaning of which could be pronounced certain.

But it is enough for me to show that Doctor Whately's argument is utterly inconclusive. If, as he holds, the Scriptures contain all things necessary to be believed, and supposing the infallibility of the Church to be a revealed doctrine; then it should, according to him, be contained in Scripture. and it

should be contained clearly there, for the reasons assigned, though these reasons do not prove that other doctrines should be clearly contained there.

*Secondly*, I deny that Catholics derive their knowledge of the infallibility from examination of the texts which convey that doctrine. The texts, it is true, do clearly enough convey it to those who are competent to examine them. But it is not in this way the faithful actually learn it, but through the traditional teaching of the Church. This however is a very wide subject which I shall not enter into farther at present.

They who hold that Scripture is the sole rule of faith, must hold that this so fundamental a doctrine is itself contained in Scripture. Yet how many of them have learned it from examination of Scripture? Not one of all those who have grown up in this faith. Many or most of them, not being able to read, are incapable of making the examination to their dying day: and all have received and believed the doctrine, long before they made or were well capable of making such examination.

“If we are competent to judge of their meaning [*i. e.* the meaning of the passages which teach the infallibility] then our alleged unfitness for judging, and the necessity thence inferred, are done away”.

Our unfitness [which is *not alleged*] of judging of those texts, and perhaps of others equally clear, is done away: Granted: no Catholic ever held that the Scripture is so obscure in every text. Our unfitness to judge of innumerable *other* passages, and above all to form a body of doctrine out of them, is done away: Denied: there is a manifest *non sequitur* here. Reasons already given.

"If we are not competent to judge of the meaning of any doubtful [disputed] passage, [we do not hold this] then, though we may admit the necessity of an uncerring interpreter, we can be never sure that we have found one": *i. e.* we cannot be sure on the Protestant principle that Scripture contains all, and contains it clearly: Granted. We cannot be sure on our own principle that it may be and is clearly contained in the unwritten rule: Denied.

## V.

2. "Again, the alleged necessity is, for an infallible interpreter universally and readily *accessible*. And this no Church can even pretend to have provided. Supposing a central infallible Church to exist, it is not one Christian in ten thousand that can put himself in direct communication with its

supreme governors. Each individual may, indeed, use its formularies, and may assign to them the same authority as to Scripture; but he can be no more competent to interpret the one than the other, or to supply aright any omissions; he is still in want of an infallible guide to direct him how to conform with unerring exactitude to his Church. And this guide must be, to the great mass of mankind, the *pastor* under whom each is placed. The pastor's conformity to the Church must be taken on his own word. If *he* be either ignorant or erroneous or dishonest,—if, in short, every individual pastor be not himself infallible, the Christian people, whose incompetency to judge for themselves has been all along presupposed, may be as much misled as in their perusal of the Scriptures" (p 28).

I shall state a few replies to this argument as briefly as possible.

1. We do not hold that the infallible authority must be or is readily accessible to *all* upon *all points*. The mass of the faithful are ignorant of many definitions of the Church known to learned theologians.

2. Doctrinal disputes may arise on questions hitherto not defined or not clearly defined. The Church may allow such disputes to continue for a

length of time, without settling them by a definitive sentence.

3. On defined points, which all are bound to believe explicitly, and therefore to know, the teaching of the infallible tribunal is readily, *most* readily accessible to all. Take the doctrine of the Eucharist: is there a Catholic (I speak of a Catholic really such, not of a man who has grown up like a beast of the field, and calls himself a Catholic because he hears himself called so, and knows nothing more about it), is there a Catholic from pole to pole who is ignorant of the doctrine of the real presence and transubstantiation? The same is true of every doctrine which it is, as well as of others which it is not, of obligation to know—the unity and all infinite perfections of God—the creation of the world out of nothing—the creation of man in a state of innocence and sanctity—his fall—original sin the consequence thereof—the atonement of Jesus Christ—his divinity—the Trinity of persons in one God—the eternity of the joys of Heaven and of the pains of Hell—the sacrament of penance, its necessity, its effects, the dispositions required for its worthy reception—the sacrament of baptism, its necessity and effects—the indefectibility and infallibility of the Church—the

supremacy of the Holy See, etc., etc. Not only all Catholics, but most of those who are not Catholics and have received any thing like a religious education, know that the Catholic Church holds a distinct defined doctrine on all these points, and know what that doctrine is. This is a fact, an indisputable *fact*. Every Catholic has a moral certainty of what the teaching of the Church is on the aforesaid points, as strong as is his physical certainty that the sun is in the sky when he sees it there. No abstract reasoning can overturn this plain fact; but, if I understand the principle of Dr. Whately's argument, the fact overturns it.

The case is widely different in the Established Church. After the doctrines of mere natural religion, it is impossible for any one, whether he is a member or not of that Church, to know what she teaches on almost every other doctrinal question. I know what Dr. Whately holds on several points, I know what the Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury holds, what the Protestant Bishops of Exeter, London, Norwich, respectively hold; just as I know, but by no means so clearly as I know, the opinions of Bellarmine or Tournelly on certain disputed matters. But when I come to ascertain what the Established *Church* holds as fixed and defined

doctrine—doctrine not to be denied without the guilt of heresy—all inquiry becomes useless. Does she hold the Lutheran doctrine on the real presence? Does she hold the infallibility of the Church universal, even according to the Tractarian idea of a universal Church? Does she hold the doctrine of the Trinity as Catholics hold it, or as the Sabellians are said to have held it? Does she hold that ordination impresses any thing real on the soul, or that it is merely what the scholastics call an “extrinsic denomination”, like the title of magistrate or field marshal? Does she hold that baptism remits original sin, or is merely an external rite of incorporation with the visible Church, as enlisting incorporates with the Queen's army? Does she hold the necessity of apostolical succession? On these and several other points I see Dr. Whately, and Dr. Sumner, and Dr. Hinds, and other bishops and leading theologians of that Church holding and maintaining a side diametrically opposed to that held and maintained by other bishops and theologians of that Church. When Dr. Whately published his Essays on the “Kingdom of Christ”, he was denounced openly in the *British Critic*, the great quarterly organ of the Tractarians, as a heretic. Yet Dr. Whately, and Dr. Sumner, and those who

go with them, have just as good a right as their opponents to call themselves true bishops and orthodox members of the Established Church. There are many books, much disputation, much teaching; but meanwhile what is the teaching of the *Church*?

I at present draw no inference from the foregoing except in reference to the matter before me. *It is a fact* then that the Established Church, confined as she is to one compact corner of Europe, and to people all speaking the same language and subject to the same government, is not readily accessible—is not accessible at all. Nay, what does she tell us of her own self? who is she? what is she? where is she? in what way or through what organ does she speak? I know, or conjecture, what Dr. Whately or Dr. Philpotts would reply. Their answers would differ as wide as the poles asunder; and still the answers are but theirs, not the answers of the Church. *It is also a fact* that every member of the Catholic Church is perfectly sure of her teaching on all points which he is bound to know, though her empire extends from the rising to the setting sun, and embraces all tongues and all varieties of the human race.

It would appear then that the infallible Church

is not only readily accessible, but peculiarly accessible by reason of her infallibility. And indeed this should be so from the very nature of the thing. For an infallible Church teaches with supreme, all-subduing authority. When she does distinctly define, we are sure that she means what she says, and that the definition is unchangeable, one and the same for ever more. As it is easier to transfer solid gold than jelly, without injuring its shape, so the settled unalterable dogma is more easily diffused, without danger of adulteration, than ill-defined opinion.

4. When Dr. Whately asserts that men are no more competent to interpret the formularies of the Church than to interpret the sacred Scriptures, he surely cannot mean to imply that, *e.g.* the definition of the real presence by the Council of Trent is as difficult of interpretation as the Epistle to the Romans, or indeed almost any chapter in the whole of the New Testament. It is a notorious fact that, especially for the last three hundred years, almost every page of the New Testament has been interpreted in various ways, and opposite doctrines drawn therefrom by the most learned men. It is a fact equally notorious that no man learned or unlearned ever doubted during the same period

that the Catholic Church has all this time taught the doctrine of the real presence. It is not then so difficult to understand what the Church teaches, as to understand what Scripture teaches from Scripture itself.

I must not omit to remark on Dr Whately's use of the phrase *interpretation of formularies*, that it is not from the examination of her written formularies that the faithful learn the doctrine of the Church, but from the ever living and speaking Church herself instructing through her ever living and speaking organs. Of course doctrines may be learned through written formularies, and some doctrines are sometimes so learned, *e. g.* by theologians who examine the doctrinal degrees of General Councils or the dogmatic constitutions of the Sovereign Pontiffs. But I am speaking of the general and essential system whereby the faithful learn what to believe.

5. I admit that a case is possible where the simple faithful, in a particular place, might imbibe unsound doctrine from their pastor, and the error remain for a time unnoticed and uncorrected. This might happen, at least it may be granted that it might happen, for example, in a rude parish where the people are shut out from communication with the rest of

the country. But we must not argue on the hypothesis of an imaginary world, but of the world as it actually is—as God's goodness and man's wickedness have made it. We are not concerned with possible cases, or how it might fare with a handful of half informed Catholics squatted at the source of the Niger; we are concerned only with the actual Catholic Church as things ever have been, and are, and ever will be. Take Ireland—any other country in Europe or in any part of the world where there is a Catholic population with a regular ministry, would answer as well—but let us take Ireland, and see how matters are, see the *fact*. Suppose that the parish priest of the most barbarous parish in all Ireland, were to stand on the altar some Sunday, and preach to his people that the Church taught and defined that Christ was not really present in the Eucharist, or that the bread remained after consecration, or that there are not three persons really distinct in God, or that Christ was not God, or that confession to a priest was not necessary, or that a priest had no power to forgive sins, or that baptism did not wash out any sin, or that the Pope was not head of the Church, or that good works were not meritorious, or that grace

could not be lost, or that faith alone saved men, etc., etc.; I undertake to say that if any parish priest in any parish in Ireland were publicly to teach any one of the above errors as the doctrine of the Catholic Church, the alarm would be instantaneously taken and communicated. The pastor's conformity to the Church would *not* be "taken on his own word". It is a fact that pastors cannot unnoticed and unchecked lead the people astray; or if in any place the people should imbibe error and pertinaciously adhere to it, they are cut off, and the Church accomplishes her destiny without them, as they theirs without her. Infallibility is a living principle which extends its influence through the whole body. Parts may resist that influence and die and be cut off, but the living body still remains. Parishes or dioceses or kingdoms may lose the faith, and others take their place in the kingdom of God. But when they embrace error, it is at once known that they embrace it. How? Because they reject the teaching of the Church. How is it known that they reject it? Are we not "still in want of an infallible guide" to inform us whether they really have mistaken the meaning of the Church's definition? Not at all. The matter is very clear, for—

6. That the Church teaches such and such doctrines is not a thing which the faithful are to discover by abstract investigation, or indeed by hard study of any kind. For it is not only a question of *fact*, but a question of public, plain, momentous fact, about which, unless they wilfully blind themselves, they cannot be deceived. That the whole Catholic Church teaches and professes to believe the real presence or the supremacy of the Pope, is not this a fact as public and as clear as that Pius the Ninth is the present Pope, or Victoria the present Sovereign of England? The true meaning of a book—of the Epistle to the Romans for example—may be also said to be a matter of fact: but it is, at least to the mass of inquirers, a very obscure fact, a fact not only very difficult, but morally impossible to be ascertained by them. The doctrine of the Established Church on baptismal regeneration is also a very obscure fact, impossible, I fear, of discovery; for it appears to me that the *Church* teaches nothing at all on the subject, the only teaching being the open profession of the most conflicting opinions of different parties within her fold. The fact of the infallible Church's holding certain doctrines, differs as widely from such facts, in the relative facility and certainty with which

they are known, as the fact that Victoria is now Queen of England differs from the fact that would be announced in answering the question: “Who was the man in the iron mask?”

7. The whole past history of the Church furnishes the most overwhelming evidence, in almost every page, that her doctrine on all points decided by her was universally and clearly known; that she was always readily accessible. The least innovation in doctrine, or even in the phraseology consecrated to the accurate expression of doctrine, was always enough to set the whole Church in a blaze. Arius, Pelagius, Eutyches, Nestorius, and the rest corrupted the common faith. There was no mistake, no doubt about it. The utterance of the new doctrine rang like a trumpet peal through the most distant regions. Bishops, priests, and laity are everywhere astir; councils meet; Peter speaks through Leo; a new definition or exposition is issued—of new doctrine, of doctrine not known before? No such thing: they only say, This is our faith; this is what we have always believed, what the whole Catholic Church has always believed. They state the actual faith of the Church, and no more.

It sometimes happened that wily heretics tried to

make believe that they agreed with the Church. But, to accomplish their end, they were obliged to frame ambiguous formulas, to shuffle and lie; their error in its proper form, not shrouded in Catholic forms, would have been so quickly everywhere discovered and denounced. The faith of the Church was always so clear, so universally known on all defined questions, that it was impossible for heresy to lift its head in any quarter without being at once recognized and attacked. When Luther published his new doctrines, was it not at once manifest to all, in every place where they were heard of, that they were new, that they contradicted the existing doctrines of the Church? Why so? Because these doctrines were universally known.

8. We do not claim for the infallible Church in after ages, to be more accessible than it was in the times of the Apostles. They were infallible: here was confessedly an infallible tribunal. But they could not be everywhere; they could not instruct all personally at all times. Their infallible teaching was communicated through the ordinary channels established by Christ, and through the ordinary natural channels through which men learn such truths.

9. "The pastor's conformity to the Church must be taken on his own word", says Dr. Whately. Not at all. It might be so, or might be conceived to be so, in a little secluded parish on the top of Ararat, if people could live there. But in the real habitable and inhabited world it is not so. Suppose one of the Catholic clergymen in the parish in which Dr. Whately resides to preach a discourse on the real presence, or the sacrifice of the mass, or the sacrament of penance. He announces the Catholic doctrine; but every one of his hearers know that all the rest of the congregation believe the same, that the other clergy of the parish believe the same, that all the clergy and Catholic laity of the city, of the diocese, of the kingdom, hold the same doctrine. They see the communion in one faith through all. Then they know—they know through the ordinary medium of human testimony, as they know that Americans, French, Germans, etc., have visited the Crystal Palace—they know that bishops and priests come over here every year from America, from France, from so many quarters of the world; they know that they celebrate mass, and attend Catholic ceremonies, and mix with the Catholic body clerical and lay as one of themselves; and they know that all profess the

supreme headship of the Roman See, etc., etc. It is not on the mere word of the pastor that the faithful believe that the doctrines preached by him are really the doctrines taught by the whole Catholic Church: they have irresistible testimony of the fact from witnesses innumerable.

10. Dr. Whately says that each individual "is still in want of an *infallible* guide to direct him how to conform with unerring exactitude to his Church". Surely he cannot mean that a supernaturally infallible guide is necessary, in order that a man should know for certainty the public faith of the bishops, priests, and laity of the whole Catholic Church. If this be so, I fear that the exquisite irony of his own argument against the existence of Napoleon Buonaparte, would turn out to be no irony at all, but sound sharp reasoning; and that, after all, we cannot be sure that the great conqueror ever existed. I have already sufficiently indicated the distinction that should be drawn between certainty and infallibility.

I have in this section intentionally avoided, as far as was possible, touching on the Catholic exposition of the Analysis of faith—this being a topic which I would hardly feel myself justified in opening, unless I developed it fully and clearly; and

this would occupy perhaps a quarter of the present volume. Besides, I am only bound to answer Dr. Whately's arguments; I have not undertaken more than this.

## VI.

There is another argument advanced by Dr. Whately from the incompatibility of *Infallibility* with *Universality*. This argument, which is directed partly against the Tractarians and partly against us, I shall not notice particularly. So far as it bears against the former, I have nothing to do with it; so far as it bears against us, I have only to say, that it proceeds on a complete misapprehension of our doctrine on the *Unity* and *Catholicity* of the Church.

When I commenced to write this paper, I intended to examine only the argument from the discourse of St. Paul in the Acts, at any length; and to subjoin three or four pages of short, loose notes on the rest. It has however grown under my hand, until I begin to feel that, having gone so far, I might as well have undertaken to enter fully into the Catholic Proof. This very interesting task I may perhaps hereafter execute. As it is, I think I have said enough to show that Archbishop

Whately has completely failed in his argument against our doctrine. I trust that I have written—it certainly was my desire and intention to write—in a style altogether exempt from anything personally disrespectful to His Grace.



## **Reason and Faith:**

**THEIR RESPECTIVE PROVINCES AND MUTUAL  
HARMONY.**



# Reason and Faith.

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## CHAPTER I.

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### IDEA OF REASON AND FAITH, ETC.

1. We speak of Reason and Faith. On one side, we say Reason is incompetent to judge of matters of Faith: Reason cannot penetrate the mysteries of Faith: Faith is above Reason: Reason must yield to Faith, must obey Faith: we believe by Faith, and not by Reason; etc., etc. On the other side, it is said that Reason must judge all things: Reason is opposed to Faith: a man cannot help believing what he believes by Faith; etc., etc. What do we understand by the word *Reason*, what by *Faith*, in these and similar assertions? Are the words used in the same sense on both sides?

2. To understand clearly and perfectly the sense in which these terms are used in the present inquiry, it is necessary that the reader should know, or rather should bear in mind, the following very elementary but not less important principles.

It is evident that God has endowed the human mind with the faculty of discovering, understanding, and comprehending truth. What classes and what extent of truth this faculty embraces, I do not as yet say; for this forms a main section of the inquiry on which we are about to enter.

It is equally evident that we possess a natural desire of knowledge, and also the faculty of assenting to truth known as such. We are naturally curious to know the great events of history, the lives of eminent men, the phenomena and laws of the visible world, the hidden things of the unseen world: and when any of these are disclosed to us with evidences of their truth, we can accept and believe them, and we feel a natural inclination to accept and believe them. There can be no doubt that the natural tendency of the human mind is towards the acceptance of known truth, and towards the rejection of known falsehood.

3. Nevertheless, we do not always assent to truth, though sufficiently proved to us: for it often clashes with our strongest and most cherished passions and prejudices; and in such cases, though we possess the power of embracing, we are impelled by our unreasoning inclinations to reject it, and often yield to these inclinations, and actually reject it.

On the other hand, we often accept propositions without sufficient evidence, or any evidence at all, of their truth: our corrupt inclinations leading us astray, and getting the better of us.

4. To reject a proposition established by evidence is plainly unreasonable. Nor is it less unreasonable to assent to a proposition without any evidence of its truth, or to assent to it with undoubting firmness on feeble evidence. We must have some means of knowing the truth, and through these means we must know it as truth; otherwise we act not as reasonable creatures in believing it. Thus, if a man should take it into his head to believe that there are whales like ours in the Moon, or that some of the planets are inhabited by men with bodies like corkwood, or that there are gold mines at the bottom of the Red Sea, or that Homer had a hooked nose, or that Nestor's great-grandfather was blind of one eye, he would believe unreasonably, because he has no evidence whatever that any one of these assertions is true. So if a man utterly ignorant of astronomy should believe a proposition in that science, told to him by some one neither qualified to impart the information from his own knowledge, or to communicate it from another well informed, he would act unreasonably. So of

historical and all other truths whatever. It is not enough that the proposition is true: we must know it to be true; and to know it, we must have the means of knowing it.

5. Now God has given us not only the faculty of finding truth, but also the means of finding it, without which that faculty would be useless. These means are different according to the different sorts of truth; as consciousness, by which we know what is passing in our own minds; the senses, by which we know external objects; etc.

In our language the word *evidences* appears to me the most appropriate term for designating, in a generic way, the media whereby we come to the knowledge of truth.\* Evidence is classified in several divisions. In reference to the source from which it is derived, it is *physical*, *metaphysical*, or *moral*. In reference to the clearness and closeness of its connection with the truth, it is *immediate* or *mediate*. The division with which we are at present more immediately concerned is that of *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* evidence.

\* The word is also used in the cognate sense for what proves and substantiates. In our philosophers the phraseology varies; "Motiva judicii", "Motiva certitudinis", "Fontes veritatis", etc.; all which signify the same thing under different conceptions.

6. That is intrinsic evidence, which shows the truth of a proposition from the nature or properties of the subject matter of the proposition, or from the nature or properties of something else which lead to a knowledge of the thing, or from both together. To persons unaccustomed to this sort of reading or study, the preceding definition — or description — will not, I suspect, appear at first sight over transparent. Even to such readers, however, I hope it will appear clear enough, when I shall have concluded my exposition and illustration of this division of evidence.

First truths are known from intrinsic evidence: for we know them from the nature of the thing, which in this case is immediately evident; as "The whole is greater than a part", "A thing cannot be and not be at the same time", etc. The impossibility of a part being greater than the whole, or of a thing existing and not existing at the same time, is intuitively evident from the idea of a whole and a part, of existing and not existing. This is intrinsic evidence: it is from the nature of the thing intuitively known.

From the nature of angles and triangles, and from the application of first truths, we know that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right

angles. This is intrinsic evidence, not intuitive but discursive, drawn out by inference from the nature of the things. Such are all the propositions of mathematical science.

As from the nature of angles, etc., by the exercise of my reasoning powers I know that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles; so from the light itself, by observation, by the exercise of my senses, I know that there is a lamp on the table. This is intrinsic evidence. It is from the nature or property of the thing itself—viz., that the light diffuses itself on the surrounding objects, and on my organ of sight among the rest, that I know there is light. So if I am in a joyous mood at the present moment, I know this from the feeling itself which exists in my mind, and of the existence of which I am conscious. Whatever I know of mind or matter from observation or experiment, is all known by intrinsic evidence.

If a man sees a volume of smoke issuing from a chimney, this is to him intrinsic evidence that there is some combustion within. What he knows of the properties of smoke leads him to the knowledge of fire.

When we prove the existence of God from the traces of design everywhere pervading the universe, the evidence is intrinsic. The argument is not

from the nature of God himself, but from the fact, that the marks of design exist in the universe, and from the principle, that such marks cannot be produced except by a designer, and then that such designer cannot be less than God. The whole argument is from facts known from intrinsic evidence, and principles known from intrinsic evidence. But when I prove that God is infinitely perfect, from his being self-existent, the evidence is intrinsic from the nature of the thing itself. Self-existence necessarily implies infinite perfection.

The immortality of the soul is proved, so far as reason proves it, partly from the actual condition of the soul itself, its aspirations and capabilities, and partly from the attributes of God. Here we have intrinsic evidence, partly from the nature of the thing itself and partly from the attributes of another being distinct from it.

7. If—to resume one of the illustrations just given—I exhibit signs of inward joy, an observer who thence infers that I am really joyous at heart, judges partly from intrinsic, partly from extrinsic, evidence. Partly from intrinsic evidence; as the external manifestations of joy are the natural signs of the internal feeling, and generally arise from the internal feeling. Partly from extrinsic evidence:

because I may, after all, be but playing a part, and pretending to feel what I do not feel. Hence, before he is sure that I am what I appear to be, he must be sure that I am acting ingenuously; that is, he must be sure of my veracity—as I may call it—on the occasion: his evidence rests on my authority, and therefore, as we shall see more clearly just now, is so far extrinsic and not intrinsic.

8. Truth not known from intrinsic evidence, to be rationally believed, must be believed on the authority of some one to whom it is thus known. If a person ignorant of mathematics wishes to know the relations of the surface or solidity of the circumscribed cylinder to the inscribed sphere or cone, he is, from the supposition of the case, incapable of knowing them from intrinsic evidence: he can only know them from a mathematician who has himself learned them by the usual process of mathematical investigation. Of course the information, as in all similar cases, may come direct from the mathematician himself, or through the testimony of intermediate witnesses. That our Lord raised Lazarus from the dead is a fact of which those who witnessed it with their own eyes had the same intrinsic evidence of the senses, as they had that our Lord himself was really present on the occasion.

But those who did not witness it can only know it on the testimony of those who did.

This is *extrinsic* evidence, that is evidence of authority.\* By authority is meant testimony to the truth of any fact or doctrine. If the person giving the testimony is competent to testify to the truth of the proposition, *e. g.* a mathematician to a proposition in Euclid, or the eye-witness of a fact, and if he be moreover trustworthy, then the evidence is decisive: if his competency or trustworthiness be doubtful, the evidence is doubtful: if he be decidedly incompetent or unworthy of confidence, the evidence goes for nothing. The evidence of authority is called extrinsic because it is entirely external to the particular truth established by it, is not drawn in any way from the nature of the thing itself.

We may therefore say that all evidence which is not in any way from authority is intrinsic evidence: whatever I know by my own observation or investigation, altogether independent of the authority of another, I know from intrinsic evidence. This, though giving but a negative idea of intrinsic

\* LUGO, de Fide, D. 1, s. 6. PERRONE, de Locis, p. 3, n. 24.  
DMOUSKI, Institut. Philosoph., T. 1, n. 69.

evidence, saying not what it is, but what it is not, is sufficiently intelligible for practical purposes.

It is unnecessary to illustrate further the nature of extrinsic evidence. Suppose any proposition whatever to be received on the authority of another, and you have extrinsic evidence.

9. It is plain that extrinsic evidence does not render the truth which it proves *in itself* clearer than it was before. It proves the *fact* that such or such a proposition is true, that the two ideas which are said to agree do really agree; but it does not make one *see* their agreement: it shows me *that* they agree, not *how* they agree. Whatever obscurity existed before as to how this agreement takes place, exists still: it is not removed, but, if I may so speak, neutralized by the evidence, and its influence in preventing my assent subdued. I believe in consequence of the evidence, but in spite of the obscurity. Thus, suppose I had never witnessed any of those curious experiments which are performed by the electrical or galvanic apparatus, or by steam. The *mere results* are stated to me by a number of credible witnesses, whose authority justly commands my assent. I believe, and I act rationally in believing; but I am still as ignorant as ever of the process by which the results

are obtained. I believe, for example, that a line of carriages is moved rapidly along a level plane, without any force of man or beast: but the difficulty which I originally felt on hearing this, as to how it can be effected, still remains, after testimony has compelled me to believe that it is effected. Nay, after I have witnessed the phenomenon with my own eyes, and therefore have had intrinsic evidence of the fact, the same difficulty remains. The Indian prince, to use Hume's well known illustration on another subject, who had never seen water except in a liquid state, could form no clear conception of it in its congealed state; and after believing, as he was in reason bound to believe on adequate testimony, that it may be and in other regions sometimes is congealed, has still but an obscure, if any, conception as to how this takes place. In like manner, to borrow an illustration from religion, the Christian revelation teaches that there are three distinct persons in one God. I believe this most firmly on the divine authority, but the obscurity of the doctrine still remains. The Christian believes it, but sees it as little as before he believed it.

10. Intrinsic evidence does not always make the truth in itself clearer than before, because the

evidence may be only of the fact, as is plain from the phenomena of electricity and steam just alluded to. Thus, the argument for the existence of God which is drawn from the necessity of a first cause to account for the existence of the universe, I call intrinsic evidence; for it arises from a consideration of the nature of this universe, which could not have created itself; it is evidence which rests in no way on authority; yet the fact of creation, which it proves, is after the proof as incomprehensible as ever.

Of course it may happen that the same proposition, *e. g.* that the world is created, that God is good, can be proved both by intrinsic and extrinsic evidence: and of two individuals, one may accept the proposition on one species of evidence, another on the other; or the same individual may at different times assent to the same proposition, now on one, now on the other evidence.

11. Assent to a proposition on mere authority is what we call *Faith*; and he who yields the assent of faith is said to *believe*, as distinguished from him who assents on intrinsic evidence, and who is said to *know* or to *see*.\* In the same way *faith* (*sides*)

\* "Quod intelligimus aliquid rationi debemus: quod credimus auctoritati". S. AUGUST. de Util. Credendi, c. 2.

is distinguished from *knowledge* (*scientia*). These distinctions are, however, rarely if ever attended to in popular discourse. Faith may be defined as Webster has defined it—one or two useless words being omitted from his definition—“The assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting on his authority without other evidence”.\* If the authority be human, the faith is human. Such is our assent to the statements of witnesses, or to the records of profane history. If the authority be divine, the faith is divine. Such is our assent to revealed truths proposed to us with sufficient evidence that they are revealed.

12. The word Faith is also often used to signify doctrine or a body of doctrine claiming the aforesaid assent. As when we say, “The Real Presence is an article of faith”, “The Catholic faith is proved from Scripture and Tradition”. Faith, as contradistinguished from Reason, is sometimes taken in one, sometimes in the other sense: in which of the two meanings it is taken in any particular context, the context itself will easily determine. There are

\* WEBSTER’s Dictionary. The above definition agrees in substance with that given by all theologians.

other meanings of the word which do not appertain to our present inquiry.\*

13. The word *Reason* has a variety of significations, which may be distributed under different heads. Under the head denoting a faculty of the mind, it has the following specific meanings.

1º. It signifies the faculty or collection of mental faculties, natural and—though in different degrees—common to all men, whereby we discover, understand, and comprehend truth. Thus we say, Human reason is able to discover the elementary principles of the natural law, Man's reason enables him to see the truth of such or such principles.

2º. It sometimes signifies the whole of the mental faculties by which man is distinguished from the brute creation; that is, not only the faculty of discovering, understanding, and comprehending truth; but also taste, or the faculty of discovering the beautiful, etc., in the intellectual or material creation: the reflex faculty of contrivance or design, that is, the faculty of selecting an end, and adapting means to the accomplishment thereof, with a consciousness of the adaptation, etc.

\* V. SUAREZ, D. I. s. 1. EUSEBIUS AMORT, Quæst. Proleg., q. 15.

3° It signifies the faculty whose operation is denoted by the word *to reason* and the participial noun *reasoning*; that is, the faculty of discovering, applying, and pressing arguments, of deducing inferences, resolving difficulties, etc.

4° Besides the aforesaid meanings, which are all classified under the generic idea of mental faculty, Reason also signifies the principles discovered by reason in the first sense. In this sense, the word is, I think, more commonly used to denote the broad primary principles, many of them self-evident, from which the detailed and less evident truths of human knowledge are evolved, or by which they are tested. It is, however, not unfrequently used to signify the latter. It is in this sense we use the word when we say, Such or such a doctrine is proved by reason, is according to reason, or is contradictory to reason.

The first and fourth of the above meanings are those in which the word is used, as distinguished from Faith. When it is used in one, when in the other of these meanings, will be clear from the context.

14. What is known on purely human authority must have been first known from intrinsic evidence. This is evident from the nature of the case; for

authority necessarily presupposes knowledge. If a man proposes any doctrine for my acceptance which he does not know (from intrinsic evidence) to be true, or, what amounts to the same, has not received immediately or mediately from him who does know, his authority is worthless, is no authority. For example, if a man tells me, who am supposed to be ignorant of the proposition, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, I ask him how is he sure of this? from examination of the thing? If he answers, no; then I ask him if he has learned it mediately or immediately from some one who has examined? If he again answers, no, it is plain that he has no ground whatever for his assertion, that his testimony is not authority. But if he answers that, though he did not examine himself, he learned the proposition from one who had examined it, or from one who had it from one that had examined; then I come to the original witness, and if I find that he also has not examined the matter, the conclusion is the same, there is no authority. The same reasoning will apply to all assertions whatever resting on merely human authority: they must have originally come to man from intrinsic evidence, or they are utterly baseless.

15. As then all our merely human knowledge,

though in part received by one man from another on authority, is really drawn from intrinsic evidence; we rightly say that all this knowledge is known from reason, as distinguished from what is learned from superhuman authority. The reason of an individual finds out its own little section of truth from intrinsic evidence: what one man misses another man hits upon; the reason of many, of all the active minds in the whole human race, accumulates masses of truth, histories, biographies, sciences, fragments of science. Each man takes his share from the heap, all or in part on authority; but it is reason that collected all, not individual reason, but the minds of many individuals working by their own natural faculties.

16. It is very like an identical proposition to say that, if man is to know anything beyond what his reason is capable of discovering, it must be communicated to him by God in some extraordinary manner. A communication made by God to man, of doctrines or duties, otherwise than through the ordinary and natural medium of the investigation of reason, is what we call *Revelation*. All truth comes to us directly or indirectly from God, and might be called revealed, inasmuch as our reason and the instruments it uses for the discovery of

truth are created and given by God. To distinguish, however, the truths discovered by reason from those communicated in another and extraordinary way, the latter are called simply *revealed truths*, and the communication of them to men is called *revelation*. As the word faith is sometimes used to signify the truth believed; so the word revelation is sometimes used to signify the truth revealed.

17. Revelation may be *internal*, by an illumination of the mind; or *external*, when God manifests the truth through external and sensible signs, as in the discourses of our Lord.

It may be *immediate*, as the revelations of our Lord were to the Apostles and others who heard him; or *mediate*, as they are to us, who have received them through authorized and authoritative testimony.

It may be *general*, such as the Christian revelation; or *private*, such as the revelations recorded in the lives of the Saints as made to them.

It is hardly necessary to state that, in what I have just said, as well as in similar illustrations in the preceding paragraphs, I am *merely* illustrating. My chief business has been to define as accurately as I could the meaning of certain terms, and to

make that meaning clear and familiar by illustrations, without supposing the truth of facts or doctrines introduced or alluded to in those illustrations. This remark will also apply to like portions of what is to follow.

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## CHAPTER II.

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### PROVINCE OF REASON.

18. WHEN we speak of the province of reason, it is obvious that we use the word *reason* in the first of the four significations already noted (n. 13), for our natural faculty or power of discovering, understanding, and comprehending truth. The question, What is the province of reason? is only another form of the questions, What are the powers of the human mind in reference to the discovery, etc., of truth? Have these powers any limits, and what are they?

19. It is evident that, in some, this faculty is much stronger than in others: that it is, in some, much stronger with regard to certain kinds of truth than with regard to others; and that it is capable of improvement. Thus Sir Isaac Newton possessed

it in a much higher degree than most men, so far as mathematical and physical sciences were concerned; and no doubt his reasoning powers were greatly improved, in the particular departments wherein they were employed, by his close habitual application. The same is true of St. Thomas in metaphysical, moral, and theological science.

20. Reason may be considered as in an individual man—that is, as working in him—so far as this is practically possible, without the aid of the reason of other men, or at least without the aid of the reason of the human race at large. There can be no doubt that individual reason, in this sense, though in the mass of men, as men actually are, feeble and shortsighted in all things that do not regard animal wants and comforts, is nevertheless capable of discovering and comprehending not only some truths of mere human science, but also some of the speculative and practical truths of natural religion. But any discussion on the capability of individual reason would be quite foreign to our purpose. On this subject certain modern philosophers have fallen into errors which are admirably explained and refuted by Father Perrone\* and

\* *De Locis Theologicis*, p. 3, n. 67, etc.

other recent writers, as also by anticipation, though of course not so pointedly, by our older divines.

21. Our inquiry, then, is not regarding the power of natural reason as it is in this or that man, but as it is in its full force in any man or any number of men. Of reason thus understood we are to examine what are its powers (1) as to the discovery of truth, (2) as to the understanding of truth, (3) as to the comprehending of truth. As to discover truth necessarily implies to understand it more or less—for no one could be said to have discovered what he does not understand, to have discovered what is yet (to him) nonsense—we have only to ascertain the power of reason in discovering and comprehending.

#### I. PROVINCE OF REASON IN THE DISCOVERY OF TRUTH.

##### § 1. *General statement of the limitation of the powers of reason.*

22. I suppose human reason in any individual or number of individuals, possessing all the means which its own inherent energies and the available labours of the reason of the rest of men supply it with. As the question is, What can reason discover without the help of revelation? by the very terms

and object of the question, this help is supposed to be excluded.\* On the other hand nothing is excluded but revelation: and therefore it is supposed, as has been stated, that reason is assisted by all other attainable helps, the wisdom and experience of other times and other countries.

23. With the power of reason in the departments of purely secular knowledge we have nothing to do. That it is capable of discovering some truths of religion, is sufficiently evident; for even individual reason is capable of this. But we assert that its power herein is very limited. We cannot perhaps count with unerring accuracy the number of truths, especially of moral truths, which it is capable of discovering: but there are truths many and important, which we are sure that human reason is absolutely or morally unable ever to come to the knowledge of.

24. This impotence of reason springs from either or both of the following causes.

First, the truth may be one which reason is, from its own natural essential feebleness, incapable

\* The traces of a primitive revelation are discoverable in the history of human belief at the earliest period. When I come to speak of the power of reason in its actual condition, I do not suppose this revelation excluded, but only all that followed.

of discovering. Just as the sharpest human eye is, from the natural defect of visual power, incapable of seeing certain animalculæ in water, without the aid of a microscope; or of seeing objects or the minuter lineaments of objects at a certain distance, without the aid of a telescope. Or as a man is unable to raise himself to the top of a high pillar, without the help of a ladder or some similar contrivance. The truth is such that we require either a new faculty or, what is in effect the same thing, a new light to find it out: as motes, otherwise invisible, are seen distinctly in the sunbeam.

Secondly, the truth may be of that order which we have the faculty of discovering, yet, from actually existing impediments, it is absolutely or morally impossible for us to discover it. As an astronomer can make such or such observations on the Heavenly bodies, discover such or such phenomena in their movements; but if he be shut up in a room, or if the sky be covered with clouds, he can neither observe nor discover. So there may be truths which our reason is quite able to discover: yet prejudice and indulgence in forbidden pleasures may have so warped and deadened the mind, that, though still possessing the physical, it lacks the moral, power of discovering them. Thus a skilful

reasoner may become stupid from over-indulgence in intoxicating drinks.

25. Again, the truths of the first class may be such that, though reason is unable to find them out, yet when they are revealed by God, it is able to comprehend them, as it comprehends other and natural truths. Thus, reason could never discover, without revelation, that Christ had appointed Peter and his successors to the end of time to be sovereign bishops over his whole Church: but when the proposition is announced, reason comprehends it, just as well as it understands what it is to be appointed bishop in a particular diocese, or civil magistrate in a particular district.

Or the truths may be such that reason is not only unable to discover them, but, after they are revealed, to comprehend them. Thus, reason could never discover that there are three distinct persons in one God, and after the dogma is revealed, can as little comprehend the proposition. It is needless to repeat that I use these illustrations only as such.

26. The truths, then, which reason cannot discover are, we say, of three kinds. First, there are truths which reason, with its natural powers unimpaired and unimpeded, is able to discover, but which, from actual external impediments, it cannot

discover. Secondly, there are truths which reason is, from its own intrinsic incapacity, unable to discover, but which, when they are revealed, it is capable of comprehending. Thirdly, there are truths which reason is in the same way incapable of discovering, and which, even after they are revealed, it is unable to comprehend.

The truths of the third class are said to be *above* reason, and are called *mysteries*. The truths of the first class are said to be *according to* reason. The truths of the second class are in part above reason, as reason cannot discover them, and in part according to reason, as reason can comprehend them.

Whether there are truths of the first and second class, we have to examine in this division of the present chapter, which treats of reason's power of discovering. Whether there are or may be truths of the third class, will more appropriately be treated in the second division, which is on reason's power of comprehending.

### § 2. *Absolute and essential limits of the province of reason in discovering truth.*

27. PROPOSITION. There are truths which reason is, from its absolute and essential want of power, unable to discover.

This proposition is at once established as an attested fact, by summing up the evidences of the Christian religion, and then showing that it contains a number of those truths. But, as our method is analytical, removing antecedent difficulties, and showing antecedently the reasonableness of revelation, we adopt the following line of argument.

28. The first lesson which reason teaches is the limitation of its own powers, and the last lesson which it teaches, after a long life of inquiry, is the same confirmed. *And the stronger is the reason of any individual, the more strongly will the truth of this lesson be brought home to him.* What general truth reason can discover to be true, it can also show to be true. For, to discover such truth, must be to discover it, not as what may be, or is conjectured to be, but is known to be; that is, with the evidences that it is, and these evidences not merely probable, but certain, sufficient not only for grounding opinion, but conviction.

29. To begin with the nature and destiny of the human soul: there are, no doubt, truths regarding both which reason can discover; but there are many others which it is utterly unable to find out. It may discover that the soul will survive the body, and that it will be punished or

rewarded according to its good or evil works done in this life. But whether it shall, immediately on its separation from the body, pass into its final state of suffering or enjoyment, or remain in a state of unconscious existence, as some have supposed, until the end of the world, or for any other undefined period, is a question which reason cannot resolve. Yet either side must be true: it is or it is not to remain in this state of impassive quiescence. Again, whether the soul is to remain for ever in its separated state, or to be at some future period reunited to the body; and if the latter, at what period; are questions which reason is equally unable to answer clearly. Again, what kind and degree of pain it shall have to endure for its evil works, and what kind of reward it will receive for its good works; whether the reward will be a union of sensible with intellectual enjoyments, such as constitute human felicity here, or enjoyments altogether different and, as Christians believe, supernatural, and consisting in the possession of the Infinite Good by love and knowledge. Again, supposing it to be destined for this supernatural end, what are the helps proportioned to the attainment of that end, what are the works required for it. To all these questions there must be an answer, yea or

nay; and one of them must be true and the other false; but which is true or false, no effort of mere reason could ever find out. Yet they are questions of the utmost importance. They are to us interesting infinitely beyond the whole mass of mere human knowledge.

30. Secondly, as to creatures of another world: that there may be such reason tells; but whether they exist or not; whether they are pure spirits, or spirits united to bodies like ourselves; whether they were created free agents and capable of performing good and evil actions, as we are; and if so, whether they or any of them still continue in this state of probation, or have passed into a final state, and whether that state is one of happiness for all or misery for all, or of happiness for some and misery for others; and if this latter be the fact, whether the good or evil spirits, or both, have any and what relations with the present world; whether the former have any influence over our minds for good, or the latter for evil; whether the former enjoy the same kind of beatitude which is destined for good men, and the latter endure the same kind of suffering which is destined for the wicked; etc., etc. On all this reason is in perfect darkness. It can indeed demonstrate the possibility of all that

the Christian revelation teaches regarding angels and devils, and therefore can know that all thus taught may be an existing fact; but whether it is fact or not, reason does not know.

31. Thirdly, as to God, reason can discover his existence from the visible world created by him, and can discover his attributes too, but the latter not all so clearly or so easily. But of his designs and operations, beyond what our own nature and the rest of the visible world declare, it can know nothing. Yet such designs and operations are possible. Moreover, though reason can discover that God is infinite in all perfections, and find out such of these perfections as are suggested by a consideration of created things and by the imperfect idea itself can form of God; yet it cannot in any way show that there are not other perfections in God, which are not suggested or proved by any thing in our moral nature or in any other part of creation known by reason.

32. Fourthly, as to our moral conduct and religious duties, the great principles of right and wrong are discoverable by reason; and in their application by individuals to actually occurring cases, reason is aided by individual conscience. But it is possible, as we have seen, that man may

be destined for a closer union with God hereafter, for a more exalted state of happiness than any the existence of which reason can demonstrate; so it is possible that certain duties might, in such hypothesis, be required of us, to fit us for that state, over and above what reason would teach to be necessary for the only future state of happiness which it discloses. For example, faith in certain truths, not only truths discoverable by reason, but also some undiscoverable by it, might be required as a trial of obedience of intellect. Or love of God, springing from a higher motive than any supplied by reason, and altogether of a higher order, might be required.

33. I have not purposed to exhaust the catalogue of undiscoverable truths under any of the preceding heads—which indeed I could not presume to attempt—but only to indicate some, by way of example, among what seemed to me as the most obvious.

Moreover, I have supposed only the possibility of such and such truths existing beyond the sphere of reason's vision. This possibility reason proves, or at least cannot disprove. That the fact is so or so, or the opposite, reason cannot decide. Therefore there not only may be, but there are, truths

which reason is incapable of discovering. Suppose, for example, what is directly contrary to the teaching of the Christian revelation, that man is not created for a supernatural end and to see God face to face for ever, but only for a future life of natural beatitude; suppose this to be the truth; then, as reason does not teach and cannot demonstrate this truth, more than it can demonstrate a futurity of supernatural bliss, there is a truth undiscoverable by reason. Reason can prove a future life of happiness; but whether natural or supernatural, it cannot prove. The truth must be on one side; and as reason is equally silent on both, there is therefore a truth which is hidden from it.

### § 3. *Objections answered.*

34. OBJECTION I. What reason cannot prove, it thereby disproves. As the fact of a person of sound sight not seeing another in a room which he has examined all round, is a proof that the individual is not there.

35 ANSWER. I. This is an assumption of the point under dispute, or rather now beyond dispute, having been just disproved. The question has been, *are* there truths which reason is unable to discover? That is, in other words, is the existence

of a supposed truth disproved because reason cannot prove it?

II. The proof from the person, in the alleged example, not being seen in the room, that he is not *there* is decisive. He is not in the *room*, but he may be *elsewhere*. Reason cannot discover a certain truth: therefore it is not within the sphere of reason, but it may be outside that sphere. No mathematical investigation will prove an historical fact: no historical research will prove the simplest proposition in Euclid. As what reason cannot discover in one way, it may discover in another; so what it cannot discover at all, may be communicated through some other medium.

36. OBJECTION II. It may be true that reason in its actual state is unable to discover certain truths. But it does not follow, as the foregoing argument seems to imply, that reason in its healthy state is unequal to the task. Now it is of reason in this latter state that the proposition speaks.

37. ANSWER. I have proved the impotence of reason not merely in its enslaved and enfeebled condition, but in possession of its full and unimpaired energies. For reason in any condition cannot discover what it has not the means of discovering: any more than a man can fly without

wings. But among all the materials which reason possesses for the investigation and discovery of truth, there are no data whatever that lead to clear conclusions on the questions alluded to in the preceding argument. If unassisted reason is able to discover such and such truths, it should be able, at least in those who profess to have a clear revelation on those same truths, to show the evidences by which it was led to the discovery, and on which it believes. But though the attempt has been often made, no evidences have ever been shown except those of revelation.

38. OBJECTION III. Reason is given by God to man as the only means of discovering truth; for we have no other faculty whatever for the purpose. Now it does not seem to be consistent with the idea of an infinitely wise and good being, to supply a means insufficient for the attainment of its end.

39. ANSWER. The principle of this objection will come to be examined hereafter under a different form. It is sufficiently answered here by saying, that reason was not given as a means of discovering all truth: what God designed it to be capable of discovering, he created it capable of discovering. If God should wish man to know other truths than those discoverable by reason, he

will supply him with other means of knowing them. They will not be discovered by reason (as the faculty for discovering truth), but disclosed to reason (as the faculty for understanding truth).

§ 4. *Revelation as the communication of truths which reason is absolutely and essentially unable to discover.*

40. I have said that the truths undiscoverable by reason may be communicated through another medium, which, as I have already explained, we call Revelation.

Every one who admits the existence of God, must also, by the very terms, admit the possibility of revelation, at least considered in itself and apart from other operations of Divine Providence, with which it might be supposed not to harmonize. I mean that to every one not an atheist there cannot be a shadow of objection against the possibility of revelation, except in so far as God had so constructed our minds as to impress on them, through their very structure, a clear assurance that no such revelation would ever be made; or had in some other way distinctly informed our reason of his will to this effect.

And this is what unbelievers say. I shall here

briefly notice, and without putting them formally, one or two of the objections more commonly proposed, referring for a fuller examination of these and others to the latter division of the present chapter, *on Mysteries*, in which they will receive an *a fortiori* reply.

41. They say that the revelation of truths undiscoverable by reason is useless.

I answer, I. that the acquisition of new truth is always *per se* a perfection of the mind. How much more so if the acquisition be of that kind of truth which is the most interesting and sublime of all?

II. If God destined us for a more exalted state of future being than any disclosed by reason, the truths in any way connected with that state of being it would be most important for us to know.

42. Again, they say that the revelation of such truth silences, oppresses, and as it were *stultifies* our rational faculties.

I answer, that reason, so far from being silenced, acquires, if I may so speak, with new thoughts, new powers of utterance; so far from being oppressed or straitened, is more enlarged, has new regions opened for the exercise of her highest energies; so far from being stultified, has an opportu-

nity of becoming wiser, and of showing herself wiser than she could have done before.

On the revelation of the new truths, 1<sup>o</sup>. Reason receives an additional, more striking, and palpable proof of the limits of her own powers. Her powers are not thereby more limited, but she sees more clearly that they are limited—an important and most salutary truth to know and feel.

2<sup>o</sup>. Reason acquires, as I have just said, a new truth or body of truths, which, by the supposition, she understands and perhaps comprehends.

3<sup>o</sup>. Reason can exercise her powers, and is bound to exercise her powers, on a question entirely within their range, namely, the force of the evidences by which the revelation is proved.

4<sup>o</sup>. Reason can examine the doctrine itself—not, as we shall see hereafter, thereby to test its truth, which is supposed to be already proved by the revelation, but—to see more and more the full compass of its meaning, its beauty, its congruity, its connexions and adaptation in reference to other doctrines, its harmony with reason itself, its influence on the mind and heart of man, its scientific developement through inferences that follow from it, etc., etc., so far, of course, as the relative clearness

and pregnancy of each revealed doctrine will permit.

§ 5. *Actual limits of the province of Reason in the discovery of truth.*

63. PROPOSITION. Reason not only labours under the absolute and essential impotence already proved, but it is moreover, in its actual state, at least morally incapable of acquiring a sure, clear, and fixed knowledge of the body of religious truths discoverable by it in its purer state.

44. Observe, I. In order to avoid touching on points unnecessary or controvertible, I abstain from any discussion as to the precise amount of what reason in its natural condition can effect; how far, for example, an acute mind or a number of acute minds, like that of Aristotle, could penetrate into the regions of religious truth. What the human mind in its present state *can* do I say not, but I assert in the proposition what at least it can *not* do. Comparing individuals one with another, there are different degrees in which one may surpass another, arising partly from superior natural abilities, partly from superior purity and disengagement of heart and sincere love of truth. But I assert that

the discovery stated in the preceding proposition is what no man or number of men is capable of making.

45. Observe, II. It is not necessary for my purpose to assert, though it should be true, that men cannot discover the aforesaid body of truth with a conjectural, probable, obscure, fluctuating knowledge—such as Addison's Cato had of the immortality of the soul. This is not knowledge properly so called; it is but opinion or conjecture: it is not sure, steady, fixed on the solid basis of proof: it has some hold on the mind to-day, to-morrow it may lose its hold and drop off. Those who are acquainted with the writings of the philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome, are well aware of the extremely loose and shifting character of their sentiments on the primary truths of religion. They did not believe, but fancied, conjectured, doubted.

46. The proposition does not at the present day so much require to be directly proved at any great length. It used to be established, by long arrays of facts and chains of argument, against the infidels of the last century, especially in France. The fact to which I have just alluded, of the state of religious belief among the most intelligent and

cultivated nations of antiquity, abundantly proves it. The argument may be thus stated.

47. There are two incontrovertible facts. The first is this. History and all the monuments of the past that remain to us, testify to the almost inconceivable degradation of the human mind in every thing that concerned religious belief. God, the human soul, its nature and its destiny, the principles of morals, were, in the universal creed of the nations, trampled down into a mass of the most absurd and loathsome superstitions. And this was the case not only among unreclaimed savages, but among the most polished nations and at the period of their greatest refinement. It ought to humble the self-sufficient and arrogant spirit of so-called philosophy, to reflect that millions on millions of human beings, in the brightest days of Greece and Rome, believed in a multitude of gods, subject to the worst of passions and guilty of the most shameful crimes; and that not only were these impersonations of wickedness themselves, but their images of wood and stone and metal, worshipped as divine. It would fill a volume of no small dimensions to enumerate the infinite variety of forms which idolatry assumed among different nations and through successive periods. Every schoolboy is

more or less acquainted with them. What is *more* humiliating and astonishing is, that the advance of arts and science and literature and all the instruments and energies of civilization, instead of destroying or at least checking this monster of heathenism, rather shaped and confirmed it. What is *most* humiliating and astonishing of all is, that the very men who were the great lights of their respective ages in all the departments of human knowledge that tend to polish or invigorate the mind, were themselves, some hardly raised above the most debased of their contemporaries, most of them as bad, and all of them so far worse in that they, both by example and teaching, sanctioned what perhaps they disbelieved in the grossest of the gross errors of their time and country. There were men who attained the highest eminence in oratorical, historical, poetical literature, in the art of reasoning, mathematics, etc.; yet only a few of them make any approach to the simplest truths of natural religion; an approach distant, timorous, hesitating, occasional, rapidly receded from. The rest write and speak the language and ideas current about them. Cicero, the author of the book of Offices, talks of the immortal gods as, with the exception

of style, the most besotted of his pagan countrymen might have done. This is the first fact.

48. The second fact is, that no heathen people, no individual, learned or unlearned, among any heathen people, ever arrived, unless through the teaching of revelation, at a clear and sure knowledge of the truths demonstrable by reason regarding God and the human soul. Some few indeed openly, perhaps many more secretly, abandoned their belief in polytheism; but it was only to embrace atheism, or scepticism, or sensual indifferentism. This is the second fact.

49. From these two facts it follows that, if revelation had not been given to the gentile world, it would have remained to the end in the same dark state.

For, excluding revelation, all the means existed of old that exist now, or ever will exist, for the enlightenment of mankind on the great questions of natural religion.

50. (a) The intrinsic vigour of human reason in discovering religious truth is always substantially the same, in the mass of men or in the more cultivated; in Aristotle or Plato or Cicero, as in Bacon or Newton or Edmund Burke, in the mob of Athens as in the yeomanry of England

51. (b) The impediments to the successful investigations of reason are substantially the same; the same natural corruption of will, the same passions, the same seductions from pleasure or ambition or attachment to the things of this world.

52. (c) The external helps for reason to work with and premises to argue from, are the same. As Mr. Macaulay has, of course eloquently, said, "There are branches of knowledge, with respect to which the law of the human mind is progress. In mathematics, when once a proposition has been demonstrated, it is never afterwards contested. Every fresh story is as solid a basis for a new superstructure as the original foundation was. Here therefore there is a constant addition to the stock of truth. In the inductive sciences, again, the law is progress. Every day furnishes new facts, and thus brings theory nearer and nearer to perfection..... But with theology the case is very different. As respects natural religion—revelation for the present being left altogether out of the question—it is not easy to see that a philosopher of the present day is more favourably situated than Thales or Simonides. He has before him just the same evidences of design in the structure of the universe, which the early Greeks had. We say just the same; for the

discoveries of modern astronomers and anatomists have really added nothing to the force of that argument which a reflecting mind finds in every beast, bird, insect, fish, leaf, flower, and shell. The reasoning by which Socrates, in Xenophon's hearing, confuted the little atheist Aristodemus, is exactly the reasoning of Paley's Natural Theology. Socrates makes precisely the same use of the statues of Polycletus and the pictures of Zeuxis, which Paley makes of the watch. As to the other great question—the question, What becomes of man after death?—we do not see that a highly educated European, left to his unassisted reason, is more likely to be in the right than a Blackfoot Indian. Not a single one of the many sciences in which we surpass the Blackfoot Indians, throws the smallest light on the state of the soul after the animal life is extinct".\*

53. (d) From what has been just stated in the preceding extract, it is evident that the successive discoveries, the combined efforts of able philosophers, promise nothing, or promise only a harvest of new errors, or a new growth of the old.

54. (e) The influence of advancing civilization

\* Essays, P. 536.

is, just now, insisted upon with peculiar and triumphant confidence, as of itself alone capable of completely changing, as, they say, it is destined to change, the whole moral aspect of society; to accomplish a revolution in human nature which revelation has attempted but failed to effect.

The progress of civilization, so far as it expels the habits and ideas of savage life, removes certain obstacles to the discovery of religious truth; but only to substitute others perhaps still more fatal in their place. It changes the form of its idols from hideous to beautiful: error is not broken into pieces, but chiselled into more graceful shapes. Apollo and Mercury succeed Mumbo Jumbo. Advancing civilization, without revelation, rather tends to draw away the mind from the consideration of God and eternity. Painting, music, sweet poetry, measured prose, gilded palaces, and elysian villas, become substitutes for grosser idols among the rich and refined. According to the different tastes and circumstances of different nations, universal conquest, a glorious constitution, the perfection of manufactures, fairs for the nations, crystal palaces, the "almighty dollar", come to share in all that remains of the feelings of veneration and homage and affection formerly bestowed on the idea —

monstrous and defiled as it was—of a Supreme Being.

55. Civilization watched, controlled, vivified by religion, may undoubtedly be made to produce great moral effects, by generating a dislike for war, by making morality reputable and immorality disreputable, by taming the fiercer passions of human nature, and in other ways. But the advance of purely physical civilization—that is, improvement in literature, science, arts, polish of manners, the comforts and conveniences of life, courtesy and security of social intercourse, etc.—may go on for ages, and yet will not open the least glimpse into the invisible world; but rather on the contrary will, with the more civilized, tend ultimately to efface not only all anxiety to inquire after higher truth, but all relish for the possession of it. Men cease to be cannibals; civil wars are at an end; robberies and assassinations rarely occur, and, when they do occur, are execrated by the community and punished. Literature, art, the pleasures of the table and of society, the love of display, the desire to see and to be seen, form so many distinct centres of aggregation for persons of different tastes or capacities. The world is made very agreeable: there is attraction and occupation for every one.

Imagination, feeling, all cravings of the mind have abundant food to pamper them, all its powers an ample theatre whereon to exhibit themselves. The obvious tendency of all this, and, where the tendency is not counteracted by religious influences, the sure effect is to draw away the mind from the idea of the spiritual, to make that idea disagreeable, disturbing, and painful.

56. Some one said that “the proper study of mankind is man”; and this is really the practical faith to which, in such a state of civilization, the mind would be naturally led. Humanity becomes a divinity. It has made itself and its own works so delightful, so fully satisfying our desire for happiness: it has not given the one *Summum Bonum*, but it has provided a substitute for it, at least an anodyne for the painful hungering after it, in the splendour and variety of the repast it sets before us: we know nothing above it, and we desiderate nothing above it, and we are content. The Christian creed, however, is very different. It teaches that the proper study of man is God and what concerns him and leads to him: man is a proper study only in that relation. It would be just as reasonable to expect the high degree of this kind of civilization to lead to God, as it would be

to expect that the excitement of a debating club, or the scenes of a magnificent ball, with its music and lights and whirl of sensualism, would, while they last, lead to a serious consideration of death. Men seceding from barbarism do not therefore approach nearer to God: they rise not towards Heaven, but only change their place on the Earth: for their mountain and forest home they build artificial bowers and elegant houses. Civilization, where it banishes polytheism, only introduces epicurism, indifferentism, atheism.

57. When the influence of civilization is, as in these times it often is, pressed as an unanswerable proof of what man is capable of effecting, the first point to be considered is the meaning in which the word *civilization* is taken. There is a *physical* and there is a *moral* civilization, each of course admitting various degrees.

Physical civilization, without revelation, has never yet reformed the morals of a people, much less led them to the knowledge of sacred truths hitherto unknown. Where it has checked the prevalence, perhaps I should rather say the publicity, of the grosser vices, it has done so not as a moral good, but as a mere physical improvement, for the greater animal happiness and comfort of the

society. It has not subdued, but refined, the animal propensities. A peasant has no relish for rich wines; he prefers strong beer to claret, and whiskey to champagne. The man of titles and wealth, who loathes his coarse taste and revels in the produce of the choicest vintage, is not therefore more temperate than he: luxury is not less but rather more intense, when it is more delicate and select. The restraints of civilization are frequently nothing else than a zest to the more exquisite enjoyment of sin; as the usages of etiquette are often not so much a restraint on passion, as a provision for the more elegant mode of indulgence which alone charms in the circles where those usages prevail.

On the other hand, solid moral civilization of a very high order may exist where physical civilization still continues in a very low degree. A more striking example of this could hardly be imagined, than that furnished by the extraordinary history of the Jesuit mission in Paraguay. But as my purpose is to show, not what can be effected without civilization, but what cannot be effected by it, I abstain from further reference to facts which will occur to every historical student.

It is a fact that civilization has never yet led a

people to the knowledge of God: and as to its influence on morals—though with this I am not directly concerned—whatever effect it may produce in refining manners and speech, it never reaches the heart, the true centre and sphere of moral action.

§ 6. *Objections against the preceding proposition.*

58. **OBJECTION I.** If reason be thus unable to discover even the truths that lie within its own domain, it is not only useless, as being incapable of accomplishing the end for which it was given; but it is moreover, for the same reason, a delusive and mocking gift.

59. **ANSWER I.** That is not useless which even partially and imperfectly attains its end. Weak eyes are not useless, though they cannot see as clearly or as far as sound eyes. An infirm leg, with which one can only walk or limp, is not useless, though one cannot run or leap with it. The mental faculties of a dull boy are not useless, though the utmost exertion and application of them will leave him immeasurably behind Suarez or Sir Isaac Newton. Now I have not asserted that reason is not able to discover some important speculative and practical truths with sufficient certainty. On the

contrary, I assert that reason can do thus much even in its present state.

60. II. That faculty is not a useless gift, whose inefficiency is attributable to the fault of him who has received it. The faculty of seeing is not to me a useless boon of the Creator, though I should by immoderate nightly study impair or utterly destroy its power. The actual incompetence of reason is, at least to a great extent, caused by voluntary indifference, pride, enslavement of passion. Surely, if Socrates was the wisest or one of the wisest of the sages of pagan antiquity, his reason was able to teach him that Esculapius was no god, and that the sacrifice of a cock to him was an absurd as well as impious act. The corruption or obliquity of vision under which he laboured when he ordered such a sacrifice, was not inculpable in him. The reason of Socrates was not a useless gift as bestowed on him by God, though thus debased by his own free will. If it should be said that Socrates really believed in Esculapius, and that the erroneous persuasion was involuntary, so much the more evident is made, even in the wisest of men, that very weakness of reason for which I am contending—though to an extent that I do not contend for, and cannot admit. If it should be said that Socrates

was not sincere in making his dying request for the sacrifice, but only meant an external compliance with the popular superstition, then was he, reputed the wisest, in reality one of the most wicked of men, a deceiver of his fellow-creatures in the most important of all concerns. Under such blind leaders of the blind, what chance was there that reason would ever bring back the human race to the ways of truth?

This discussion necessarily supposes the existence of God admitted. If then I establish the fact of the existence of reason's imbecility, the theist, though rejecting revelation, is as much called on as I am to account for the fact: and though neither of us could clear up the difficulty, we are both equally compelled by our common premises to admit that it can be cleared up.

61. III. As before—reason, though unable to discover the truth, can easily discover that a truth is to be discovered; and can understand and appreciate the evidence of the revelation which unfolds the truth; and can understand the truth itself when proposed.

62. OBJECTION II. If reason is unable to discover certain truths, then men are not accountable for ignorance of those truths, or for the evil doing which proceeds from that ignorance.

63. **ANSWER.** I am now only considering what reason is incapable of doing. I hold this to be a question of *fact* established by observation on the actual condition and operations of reason, and by inferences directly and necessarily suggested by facts. The culpability or inculpability of individuals is a question altogether distinct, on which I am not called to enter. If a man has hurt his arm, I may inquire into the extent of the injury done to the muscular power of the arm, whether it has been rendered unable to lift such or such a weight, without being called on to inquire into the causes of the hurt, or how far the causes are to be charged on the rashness or carelessness of the sufferer.

As I am not bound to enter here upon the question of individual responsibility antecedent to revelation, I think it better not to enter upon it. The inconvenience will be thus avoided of embarrassing one question, by introducing the discussion of another into it—especially as the discussion would be of a rather intricate and protracted kind.

*§ 7. Revelation as the communication of truths which reason in its actual condition is unable to discover.*

64. The immense blessing which a revelation of the truths of natural religion (whether, morally

speaking, undiscoverable or discoverable with more or less difficulty), would confer on the human race, is too evident to require formal proof. Whether man is responsible or not for certain errors of belief or conduct—a question which, as has been just said, we here waive—it is evidently a great elevation of his intellectual and moral nature to set him on a right way of thinking and acting. If a man meets his father running towards him on a dark night, and thinks, through inculpable ignorance, that it is a wild beast, and fires upon his father and kills him, his invincible error excuses the son from sin; but surely no one would say that it would not have been an inestimable benefit to him to have known that it was his father who was approaching, and not a wild beast. The Heavens and the Earth, and the past and the future, and himself, and all things must have been an awful and inexplicable riddle to the poor heathen who believed in Jupiter and Juno and the rest. The idea of one almighty self-existing Being, of whose existence and attributes the clearest evidences lie everywhere about us, explains and illumines all—as the sudden appearance of the Sun in the Heavens at midnight would, at one flash, dispel every shade of darkness, and show every

object, hitherto invisible or distorted, in its full light and true proportions.

65. GENERAL OBJECTION. It is frequently urged by unbelievers, sometimes against the Christian revelation, often against all revelation whatsoever whether of the truths of mere natural religion or of these and other additional truths, that revelation is *in fact* useless; for we who boast that we have a revelation, are no better than those on whom its light never shone. The histories of Christian countries in modern or medieval times exhibit the same course of ambition, perfidy, cruelty, impiety, impurity, tyranny, injustice, war, devastation, etc., as is traced from beginning to end in the histories of pagan Greece and Rome.

This objection runs *silently* through a great part of Gibbon's History, and tinges almost the whole stream of his narrative. He constantly tries to depreciate the virtues of the Christians, and to exaggerate and colour up those of the pagans. He sets forth prominently and in the most repulsive forms the vices, very often the heroic virtues distorted and besmeared into vices, of the former: he passes over, or half conceals, or palliates, or dilutes into fond harmless mere pity-moving errors, the most heinous abominations of the latter. Those

portions of his history, put together in regular sequence, would resemble a tragedy, in which it was the object of the writer to enlist the reader's sympathies in the decline and overthrow of an ancient, beautiful, mild, ethereal, humanizing mythology, brought about by a band of new and obscure men, sprung from an obscure corner of the Earth, gloomy, bitter, fanatical, superstitious, filled with spiritual pride, at war with all kindly and social affections. Christianity which put down paganism so mercilessly, was exhibited in the lives of its votaries as in some respects very little better than paganism, and in others very much worse.

66. ANSWER. I. The direct effect of revelation strictly so called, is to enlighten the understanding by the communication of truth. Through revelation the mind acquires a clearer and surer and more ample knowledge of speculative dogmas and moral duties. So far the will is powerfully assisted in the fulfilment of the latter; inasmuch as a person who possesses a full knowledge of his duties, their nature, extent, and importance, is in a much better condition to discharge them, than one who is ignorant or but imperfectly informed of all this. Still the influence of revelation on the will is but indirect, and is entirely distinct from its effect on the

intellect, to which it immediately addresses itself. A man may know his duties and the consequence of performing or neglecting them, much better than another, and yet he may be equally or more careless in the performance of them. Therefore it does not follow that revelation is not useful or even necessary, because men who possess refuse to follow its light: any more than it follows that a lamp is not necessary or useful on a strange, dark, tortuous path, because a man who has a lamp chooses to put it under his cloak, or to leave it behind him, or not to travel at all.

If men resist the light of revelation, it becomes to them so far unprofitable, and in a certain way worse than unprofitable; but it is they who themselves *make* it so. The light of reason itself is, every day and in every part of the world, resisted and in a manner extinguished among the mass of men, by every act of lying, fraud, theft, blasphemy, revenge, intemperance, etc., etc., committed by them. No man ever thought of asserting that the utility of reason is thereby disproved. Nay, it is rather thereby enhanced: for if men are so bad, though endowed with reason so strong and clear, what would they be with but a lesser portion or none at all of it? If revelation were utterly tram-

pled out and forgotten, the greater blindness and wickedness of men would be demonstrated thereby, and the greater necessity for revelation.\*

67. I here abstract altogether from another aid to a good life, over and above an external revelation, namely, interior divine grace, which we hold to be necessary not only for the performance of supernatural acts, but also for the simple fulfilment of the whole body of moral duties, and for resisting the grievous impediments that constantly withdraw us from the fulfilment of these duties.

The question of divine grace and of its necessity cannot be introduced into the present controversy. All we now say is, that whatever else may be necessary along with revelation for the fulfilment of the duties of natural religion, *it* at least is necessary for the clear, sure, and full knowledge of these duties and the other parts of that religion.

68. II. Idolatry and infidelity are, in themselves

\* The intelligent reader will not require to be told that, when we speak of the necessity of revelation, we only mean necessary for man to possess, but by no means that it is necessary for God to impart it. Thus, if Peter asks John for a thousand pounds, which he wants to enable him to purchase a commission in the army, the money is necessary for Peter in order to get the commission, but it is not therefore necessary—*i. e.* a duty—on the part of John to give it.

and irrespective of their consequences, enormous sins. It is a shocking defilement and degradation of the human mind to reject all belief in a God, or to believe in a God tainted with the worst passions and imperfections, or to believe in a multitude of gods, and such gods as Jupiter and Pluto and Vulcan and Father Mars. A people exempt from any of those kinds of errors is, in so far and in a purely moral view, immeasurably superior to another people deeply imbued with them; though the public vices of the former were as great and numerous as those of the latter. Revelation were therefore a blessing above all price, though it effected no more than the removal of polytheism and idolatry, and left other sins as it found them.

69. III. These things being so, I am not called upon to enter into the question of fact, whether the history of revelation shows an improvement in morals far beyond any thing that existed when its influence was not extended or admitted. Nevertheless it is a fact that, under the Christian revelation, the improvement did take place, and did take place in a manner and to a degree quite miraculous, and that it still exists. The historic evidences appealed to on the other side, are not only not against this assertion, but these very historic evidences, taken in

more real, true, and therefore wider sense, decidedly prove the assertion.

70. In the *first* place, what is the sort of record with which most civil histories present us? Take, for example, the history of England by Lingard or Hume or Hallam, so far as the latter is a history. We are told of little else than the campaigns and battles and sieges and treaties and intrigues and other achievements of the English kings and neighbouring princes with whom they came into friendly or hostile contact; or of occasional seditions at home, and civil wars, such as the long and bloody struggles of the Roses, and the endless plottings, manœuvrings, reverses, successes, cruelties of the rival parties; something of parliamentary history, and notices of eminent statesmen or courtiers or impostors, like Burleigh or Thomas Cromwell or Simnel. That is, we have an account of the *public* life of a handful of individuals in each generation, and these very often, if not generally—the bravest, perhaps, or the most daring, or the most wily, but at the same time—the most unscrupulous, heartless, and godless of men. Of the mass of the nation, rich, poor, or middle class, we hardly catch a glimpse now and then, a glimpse, moreover, of their merely physical condition and corporal occupations— their

fare, their amusements, their dress, their progress in husbandry and the arts of domestic life, and the like. But of their lives as evidences of the extent to which the deep, silent, purifying virtues of Christianity prevailed among them, we see, it may be said, nothing at all. If a man of note, a baron or a bishop, is assassinated, or a lady of rank carried away by force, it is recorded in the Annals of the time. But of the hundreds or thousands in the same districts where these crimes occurred, whose hearts were pure and whose lives were blameless, no record is made in any book accessible to man. What passed in private families; how they worshipped God together morning and evening; how many of the young were early taught true notions of God and of their own duties, and trained in virtuous practices, and withheld from evil company and other occasions of sin; the chaste and simple lives of so many among the lower and middle classes, young and old, in rural districts and villages and remote towns, thousands on thousands, millions on millions, generation after generation; what passed in so many religious houses of men and women, the ordinary virtues of their daily life, and their heroic virtues; in a word, the every-day course of existence, with its calm, noiseless, uniform reflection of

the purest virtues — of all this, civil history hardly deigns, if it even deigns, to take an occasional and passing note.

71. In the *second* place, it is not then to civil history we are to look for an adequate picture, or any thing approaching to an adequate picture, of the state of society under Christianity, compared with the state of society under paganism; neither is it to ecclesiastical history commonly so called, which is mainly and in its detailed narrative occupied with the external and public history of the Church. Whence then shall we gather materials for a right judgment on this point? I answer, not altogether from any one source, but from many sources. We get a little from civil history; we get much more, yet but a little, from ecclesiastical history; a great deal more, and quite enough, we gather from the lives of Saints and other holy men —I do not include the miracles wrought by them, their ordinary life is abundantly sufficient—from histories of missions, from accounts of local ecclesiastical usages, from local and general ecclesiastical laws, in short, from all the sources whence light is thrown on the private common life of a people.

Take one chapter from the life of St. Ignatius or St. Philip Neri at Rome, or from the life of St.

Alphonsus Liguori during his episcopate, or at any other period of his apostolic career: it will show effects actually produced in the moral conduct of men, for which all that can be gathered from the lives of all the sages of paganism, from the whole history of paganism, through all times and places, all gleaned out and collected together, cannot furnish a parallel or the remotest resemblance of a parallel. Nay, take the life of any of these holy men, and you will find nothing like it, nothing that is not dark and deformed beside it, in the whole range of pagan history or biography. The well-known parallel drawn by Rousseau between Christ and Socrates is but a faint and imperfect type of the contrast that exists between the world with revelation and the world without it.

72. But, in the *third* place, we need not go to the records of the distant or the past for a reply: we have but to look around us, and behold! it is under our eyes. I content myself with suggesting the fact.

73. *Finally*, if we look only to the more public effects of the influence of revelation, to the public and common social evils of belief and conduct, which it has, wherever its power prevailed, swept away. Among many other things, it has abolished

atheism and polytheism and scepticism and idolatry. It has fixed the faith of men in the existence of one Supreme Being, infinitely great and good, the Creator of all things. It has fixed the faith of men in the immortality of the soul, in its high destiny hereafter. It has abolished slavery, or, where this could not be done, has mitigated its horrors, and lifted up the slave to an equality with his master before the Great Judge. It has fixed authority and obedience on a firm and true basis. It has abolished the shocking practice of the exposure of children. It has abolished gladiatorial shows. It has lessened the miseries of war, and has rendered wars of conquest and all unnecessary wars less frequent. It has banished or mitigated the terrible spirit of revenge, the thirst for the blood of him who has offended. It proclaims all men brothers, children of their common Father who is in Heaven. It has elevated the condition of woman, and sweetened and consolidated in a thousand ways the yoke of wedlock. It has made the whole atmosphere of social existence pure and odoriferous, by making chastity in maidens and matrons cherished by nearly all, reverenced and beloved by all above a crown of gold set with jewels. It has opened Heaven, and turned this Earth into a land of joy and hope,

by making it a highway leading to Heaven's gates. "All good things have come to me with her, and innumerable riches through her hands. And I rejoiced in all these: for this wisdom went before, and I knew not that she was the mother of them all. Which I have learned without guile, and communicate without envy, and her riches I hide not"—*Wisd.*, vii.

74. We have seen that reason is limited in its power of discovering truth; that revelation, as the term simply, is therefore necessary to supply this deficiency in reason's powers; and that such revelation would be a great blessing to the human race. We come now to the

## II. PROVINCE OF REASON IN COMPREHENDING TRUTH.

§ 1. *What it is to understand, what to comprehend:*  
*Idea of a Mystery.*

75. A doctrine is not a mere idea, but two or more ideas affirmed or denied of each other. Thus the ideas of God, World, Moses, St. Peter, Pope, Baptism, are not doctrines; for nothing is affirmed or denied of any of them. But if we say God

exists, God is omnipotent, the World is created, Moses was divinely commissioned, St. Peter was appointed head of the Church, the Pope is successor to St. Peter in this headship, Baptism remits sin, these are so many doctrines. Or if we say, the World is from eternity, Moses was not sent by God, etc., these too are doctrines, but false doctrines.

76. We are said to *understand* a doctrine when we understand the ideas as they are affirmed or denied of each other in the conception of the doctrine: or, in plainer terms, when we know the meaning of the proposition in which the doctrine is enunciated. For doctrine expressed in words is nothing else than a proposition, that is, a statement of the doctrine. To know the meaning of a proposition is to know the meaning of the terms of the proposition, and that they are affirmed or denied of each other in the proposition. Thus a person who has learned the elements of mathematics understands the proposition, "The three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles": because he knows what is meant by an angle, by a triangle, by a right angle, and by the equality of angles, and he knows that the equality between the three angles of a triangle and two right angles is what the proposition affirms. On the contrary, a

person to whom the meaning of any one of the words angle, triangle, equality of angles, is unknown, does not understand the proposition: it is to him unintelligible.

77. Of course a proposition may be intelligible to one person and not to another.

One proposition may be more intelligible than another, or the same proposition may be more intelligible to one man than to another. For some things are better understood than others, or better understood by one man than by another. It does not follow that the less intelligible proposition is not simply intelligible, but only that it is not so intelligible, so clear as to its meaning.

78. A proposition is clear as to its meaning when the meaning of the terms is clearly understood, and when it is clearly understood what assertion is made. A proposition is obscure as to its meaning, when either the terms are not sufficiently understood, or when, from the confused structure of the proposition, it is not sufficiently plain what assertion is intended to be made. In this sense we say "an obscure or clear writer or speaker". I have said obscure *as to meaning*: for a proposition is sometimes called obscure, when,

though the meaning is sufficiently clear, it is hard to comprehend.

79. In order that a proposition can be pronounced simply intelligible, all the necessary terms must convey some idea. If either the subject or attribute be a meaningless word or combination of meaningless words, the proposition has no meaning. Words may have a meaning by themselves, yet a particular proposition containing them may be meaningless.\*

\* There are some excellent specimens of this quoted in a recent number of the *Athenæum*, from a work on the "Vestiges of Civilization". I cannot resist the temptation to quote a sentence or two, if it were but to relieve the dryness of this section of my text.

"Reason, in the sense of syllogism, is a due superposition of Number upon generalization, a developement of properties from a principle; while Growth is like a superposition of Number upon polarity, a developement of particles from the great magnet of the Earth. Comparison, on the contrary, being a superposition of Affinities, is an envelopement of objects in a cycle of classification; even as animal Life, which was seen to be a superposition by assimilations, is that envelopement of polarities into a circuit".

Again :

"Memory gives sides to sensation, and imagination adjusts them into figures. And this compound process, led by resemblance, that is to say *formal* unity, went on to unify, to simplify these particular groupings, by embracing them within this trigonometrical expedient

80. There are three ways in which we may be said to know or to have a true idea of any object. The first is when we have a *positive* idea of the object as it is in itself. We know nothing perfectly in all its essential properties, but we have a clear knowledge of the positive constituent properties of many things. Thus, though we know not what is the essence of matter or of mind, or how mind is united to matter in the human person, yet we have a clear positive knowledge of several of the common and distinctive properties of man, *e. g.* the human form, the faculty of articulate speech, the faculty of reason manifested through various external signs.

81. The second kind of idea is the *analogical*, that is an idea of the object from its resemblance to other objects, from its being marked by one or more common properties with them. Thus we form ideas of the divine attributes, justice, mercy, etc., from the same attributes in good men, but corrected by a consideration of what is required for the infinite and infinitely perfect, and by revelation. Thus we can form an idea of the divine Personality.

of Perception, by aggregating them upon the sides of this triangular nucleus of human knowledge, upon the distant, the past, the present or personal; until all things seemed consolidated in the Supreme called the Cosmos"!!!

It is to us inconceivable, by us ineffable; yet between the divine and human personality there is some resemblance—the idea common to both being that of a distinct mode of subsisting, which in man implies distinction and diversity of substance, but in God indicates a threefold personality in one and the same substance.

82. The third kind of idea is the *negative*, which we have when we know what the thing is not, and what it does not resemble. Thus I have a negative idea of spirit, as I know that it does not occupy space, like matter; that it is not inert, like matter.

83. To these may be added (or perhaps under some of them, in a subordinate division, might be included) a fourth kind of idea, such as persons sometimes have when they speak of “having a *general* notion of such or such a thing”. We know not what the thing is, nor perhaps under what particular category to classify it, but we know that certain names or titles may be affirmed of it, *e. g.* that it is good or bad, worth knowing more intimately or not worth knowing, grand or contemptible, etc. Thus suppose a pagan who knows nothing more of the Bible than that it is held in special reverence by Christians, and therefore called by them The

Book (Bible); though he, by the hypothesis, knows nothing whatever of the contents of the Bible, yet he knows that, in the estimation of Christians, they possess a character of extraordinary excellence, sacredness, and awfulness. So if I observe that a man keeps a particular drawer with particular care and anxiety; that he has attached to it the safest and most costly lock he could procure, such as he has for no other drawer or door in his house; that he always locks it with particular care; I have no idea of what is contained in the drawer: it may be gold, or private letters, or his will, or his title deeds, or a valuable manuscript, or secret memoirs of important characters or events known to him, or treasonable correspondence, or relics of dear departed friends, or memoranda of scientific discoveries, etc., etc.: but this I do know, that it is something which he particularly values, and, if he be a man of good sense, something really valuable. Thus when St. Paul says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him"—*I. Corinth.*, ii.; these words of themselves give but the vaguest and most general idea of the joys of Heaven, do not tell us what they are; yet the meaning of the text is so far perfectly intelligible,

that these joys are great exceedingly, transcending far all joys of Earth, worth all the labours of life and life itself to win.

84. To understand a proposition is, as I have said, simply to know the meaning of it. Now a man may know the meaning of a proposition without believing it or having any grounds for believing it: as I know the meaning of the proposition which asserts that indulgences in the Catholic Church are a license to commit sin, though I do not believe and have no grounds for believing it, but the contrary.

85. A person is said to *comprehend* a doctrine when he not only understands it, but moreover perceives how the ideas are or may be united or separated which the proposition asserts to be united or separated.

When, though I understand a proposition, yet I am unable to account for the doctrine enunciated by it, to see how the subject and attribute are connected together or disunited in the way the proposition asserts them to be connected or disunited, then I am said *not to comprehend* the doctrine.\* Thus when it is asserted that God exists, uncreated, by the very necessity of his nature, from all cter-

\* In popular language the word *comprehend* is often used in the same sense as *understand*.

nity, I in some way understand the meaning of all this; but how these things are or can be I do not understand; and, after exhausting every effort of mind, I am unable to understand. The doctrine is to me incomprehensible. I know it to be true; I firmly believe it; I understand it; but I do not comprehend it.

86. From the illustration just given it is evident that reason can, prescinding from the authority of revelation, demonstrate the actual truth, and therefore *a fortiori* the possibility, of certain doctrines which nevertheless we cannot comprehend. The possibility, or perhaps more correctly the possible truth, of a doctrine may be demonstrated by reason, without the authority of revelation, in two ways—*positively* or *negatively*.\*

It is demonstrated *positively* when, (a) from the nature of the two ideas affirmed one of the other, it is shown that they are not repugnant: or (b) when, from any fact intrinsically connected [*i. e.* whose connexion is not known by authority] with the doctrine, the possibility of the latter is proved.

Of the first kind (a) of positive demonstration of possibility there is an example in the proposition,

\* LE GRAND *De Incarnatione, D. 1, C. 1.*

“The soul is immortal”. For the idea of immortality is not repugnant to the idea of the soul, which is a spiritual substance, and does not perish, like the body, by dissolution and corruption.

Of the second kind (*b*) of positive demonstration an example is furnished in the ordinary arguments for the existence of God. The mere existence of the world, and the design manifested therein, show the possibility of a Creator and Supreme Designer, and indeed prove the existence of such.

87. The possibility of a doctrine is proved *negatively* by showing that its impossibility cannot be proved. The positive demonstration of possibility proves that the thing is possible: the negative demonstration of possibility does not prove that it is possible, but that no argument can be brought to prove it impossible. Thus theologians do not undertake to prove from pure reason that a trinity of persons in one God is possible; that is, they do not prove the possibility of the doctrine positively. But they prove that the arguments advanced to demonstrate the impossibility of the Trinity do not demonstrate its impossibility; that is, they prove its possibility negatively. By the former kind of proof we see that the thing is possible; by the latter kind of proof we do not see whether the

thing is or is not possible, but only that it cannot be proved to be impossible.\* I speak only, as I have said, of what is proved by mere reason: revelation positively demonstrates not only the possibility but the fact of the doctrine revealed.

88. Every incomprehensible truth may be with propriety called, and truly is, a Mystery: but the term is commonly appropriated to those truths which are not only incomprehensible—such as the self-existence of God—but which reason is utterly unable to discover or prove except through revelation—such as the Trinity; and this appropriation is convenient, as these are the doctrines rejected by unbelievers precisely on account of their being incomprehensible.

Having premised thus much on the explanation of terms, we now proceed to state and establish against unbelievers

§ 2. *The Possibility and Utility of the revelation of Mysteries.*

89. PROPOSITION. A Revelation of Mysteries cannot reasonably be rejected on the ground that they are mysteries.

\* SYLVIUS, in 2. 2. Quæst. 1. A. 4 Quær. 1. ad sec. WIGGERS, ibid. n. 112. VIVA, Theol. Dogmat. *De Fide*, D. 3. Q. 1. n. 4.

90. This proposition is chiefly proved in answering the objections that are levelled against it. The *onus probandi* lies on the opponents of mysteries. If they can produce no demonstrative argument to prove that the revelation of mysteries as such is impossible, then they do not act reasonably in refusing to admit them on the ground that they are impossible. For this would be to reject a doctrine because it is impossible, without sufficient evidence that it is impossible. They must take some other ground, and say that the fact of the revelation having been made is not sufficiently proved: *i. e.* that the divine origin of the Christian revelation is not proved. This is the ground taken by many avowed infidels—far more commonly in the last century than at the present day—and is demolished by the arguments that prove the Christian revelation to be from God. Or they must say that, though the Christian revelation is from God, yet it contains no mysterious doctrine. This is the old Socinian system, more commonly adopted by the infidels of our time under various names, forms, and disguises. It is disproved by demonstrating the utter unsoundness of the general principles of Scripture interpretation on which it is based, and by showing that the true meaning of

such and such parts of revelation does involve mysterious doctrine. Protestants, properly so called, admit that the Christian revelation contains mysteries, but deny that it contains such or such mysteries, *e. g.* the doctrine of the Real Presence.

91. To come to our proposition: If the revelation of mysteries is impossible, this must be for one of the three following reasons—(1) That they are in themselves impossible of existence, or at least do not exist: or (2), supposing them possible, that there is no conceivable end worthy of God to be attained by the revelation of them: or (3), that it would be repugnant to the wisdom and goodness of God to exact belief in doctrines which no man can comprehend.

The first and second reasons I shall examine here, as the principles evolved in that examination are of a more positive nature, partake more of the character of direct proof, than those evolved in the examination of the third reason. This last shall be thrown into the section of objections.

92. FIRST: Mysteries are in themselves possible. For by a mystery is meant an incomprehensible doctrine; and if this be impossible, it must be because it is incomprehensible. But pure reason can demonstrate the truth of certain doctrines

which are incomprehensible. Examples of this have already turned up in passing: but we must go farther into the subject here. Reason demonstrates the existence of God, his eternity, his omnipotence, etc. Let us try to form to ourselves an adequate idea of God, a Being in whom are centred all pure perfections in an infinite degree. We cannot comprehend this. The mind becomes blinded and dizzy in the contemplation, and the more intensely it tries to form to itself an image of such a being, the more it feels its own littleness and powerlessness. The fact of the existence of God is so plain, so present to our minds, so easily takes our belief, that we never think of considering the abyss of mystery that lies under it. How *can* there be such a thing as self-existence? There was a time, or rather there was, before time began, when God alone existed, when angels, and men, and earth, and sun, and stars, and all things but God had not yet begun to be. From this non-existence he created them all by an act of his will: "Be light made, and light was made".

*How* came this round, solid Earth and all the worlds into being from not being at all, from pure nothing? *How!* We cannot conceive; we can only say God did it. How an act of his will could

bring them or the smallest particle of them into existence, we can as little conceive as a senseless stone. God is eternal. Carry the mind back as many millions of ages as there are atoms in the whole material universe. God was then as far distant from the beginning of his being as he is now: for he never began to be. We can conceive existence only as in time and space. But in God there is no succession of time; there is not past or future; there is not time at all. "Will be" or "has been" cannot, says St. Augustine, be affirmed of him: for what has been is not now, and what will be is not yet. He simply is. "God said to Moses, I AM WHO AM: he said, thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, HE WHO IS hath sent me to you" —*Exod.*, iii. "Before Abraham was made I AM" —*John*, viii. He did not, observes the same St. Augustine, say "I was", but "I am".

In speaking of God we use words that imply past and future, because we have no expression for an idea so infinitely above our conception. The eternity of God is, according to the beautiful definition of Boëtius adopted by St. Thomas, "Interminabilis vitæ tota simul et perfecta possessio": it is to me as incomprehensible as the Trinity. It may be said that one is proved by reason, the other not. I

answer that the question now is about the possibility of incomprehensible truth: and if this be proved by reason, it must therefore be admitted. The existence of God and all his attributes are incomprehensible. I repeat that we are not fully impressed with the mysteriousness of the doctrine, because the truth of the doctrine itself is so plain to us in its overwhelming and ever present evidences, and we reflect no farther. The idea of God is so great a mystery, so far elevated above the sphere of our conceptions, that we require a strong and sustained effort to raise our minds up even to that point of reflection at which the depths of the mystery begin to disclose themselves — awful — unfathomable — infinite.

93. To descend from the Creator to the creature, from the infinite to the finite, from God to man: we say the soul is spiritual. Can you conceive what spirit is? Can you represent to your mind an image of spiritual substance? No. The soul, as the scholastics phrase it, informs the body. How? You cannot comprehend how it hears in the ears, and sees in the eyes, and animates and moves the whole and all its members, itself distinct therefrom, simple and without parts. Why men do not see or hear with the fingers as with the eyes or

ears, you cannot explain. You will tell me that the organization of one is adapted to receive rays of light, and of the other to receive impressions of sound. Very true: but this is no more than a statement of the fact that it is with the eyes we see and with the ears we hear: it is a fuller statement or explanation of the *fact*, but leaves the natural mystery unexplained, why a pulsation of air on the organized matter of the ear produces the sensation of hearing, rather than a pulsation of air on the organized matter of the eye. How a piece of matter arranged in such a form and placed in such a part of the human frame, is the organ of such a sense, rather than if it were differently organized and situated, we are utterly unable to tell. It is as it is: God has so willed: he might have made the functions of the several organs of sense quite different: this is all we can say.

94. If from man we go down to brutes, our track is still darkened with mystery at every step, in the examination of their habits and instincts. We observe facts, and classify, and generalize, and give names, but farther we cannot penetrate. If we descend lower yet, to the senseless and purely material, there is mystery still—the incomprehensible pervades all. We know not how the acorn pro-

duces the oak, or how the grain of corn produces the laden stalk; how one small particle of matter of a particular form, buried in the earth until it rots, shoots up, after a few months or years, into stem and fruit and flower, of a particular colour and taste and size; how another seed produces another particular growth; and so on in endless variety. How light is produced, how it travels several millions of miles in one minute, nay, what is light in itself, are questions we cannot answer. The phenomena that strike the senses we can observe, and draw inferences from; but as to the *how* of any of them, we are completely in the dark. What is air? It is a fluid: we can feel it, and weigh it, and decompose it, and condense or attenuate it, or entirely withdraw it from the receiver: but we cannot see it: its essence we know not.

94. Examples might be produced from every object in creation from the stars of Heaven to the sands of the sea, from the cedars of Libanus to the lily of the field, from the great monsters of the deep to the invisible life that moves in a cup of water, from the soul of Aquinas to the soul of an idiot boy. The things themselves are daily before our eyes: the facts regarding them, plain and familiar, alone strike us, and being constantly before us,

prevent us from considering the deep inexplicable of their being. As in contemplating every day the outward aspect of the human form, we think not of the wonderful mechanism of the whole inward structure.

If then in the order of natural truths there is so much of the incomprehensible: if the human mind is so limited in the power of discovering these truths, more limited in fully understanding them, yet far more limited in comprehending them; it follows directly, it is an evident principle of right reason itself, that a mysterious doctrine cannot be rejected on the ground that it is mysterious, and therefore impossible. The order of truths discoverable by reason is full of its own mysteries: and no shadow of argument can be brought to show that there may not be mysteries in the order of truths undiscoverable by reason. Nay, that there are such mysteries is what reason itself would lead us to expect. For if it be impossible to comprehend truths which are, in respect of their existence, so evident or so easily made evident; how much more should this be expected in truths which to mere reason are not and cannot be made evident in any respect?

95. **SECONDLY:** The revelation of mysteries may

have and actually has ends most worthy of God, and effects most beneficial to man.

96. It may have such ends and effects. We cannot prove the contrary. We cannot presume to fathom the mind of the Deity, and to know all his counsels and designs, or indeed to know any of them, except as far as he may manifest them through reason or revelation. We have seen that the vision of mere reason is limited indeed. Many designs of God may therefore lie, and certainly do lie, far beyond its most piercing scrutiny.

97. It actually has such ends and effects.

I. A mystery revealed is a truth revealed: and all truth regarding God and his holy works is, as has been already said, and as is evident in itself, good to know in the measure that God wills it to be known. The so-called philosophers who reject mysteries profess a specially exalted estimate of the value of truth. Pure truth—the undying love of truth—enlargement of our ideas—increase of knowledge—eradication of ignorance: these and like phrases are ever on their lips. They sometimes speak as if they had a monopoly of the zealous love of truth and advancement of knowledge. On their own favourite principle they must admit that, as a divine mystery is a new truth, the revelation

thereof adds to the sum of our knowledge, and has therefore a most worthy end. It is moreover an accession of the most sublime of all knowledge.

98. II. The revelation of mysteries presents a fresh trial of obedience, and serves to strengthen that virtue in us. Among spiritual sins pride is the first and most dangerous, as among carnal sins impurity is the first and most dangerous—the former indeed almost always begetting or intensifying the latter. Pride is a passion in our nature most difficult to keep under. A word—a look—the slightest motion of the head—the way a man walks or dresses or reads or talks or eats, often kindles our pride and the passions that spring from it into an uncontrollable blaze. While in society or in solitude we are never for a single moment secure from its assaults: the senses supply its fuel in one case, memory or imagination in the other. Pride of intellect is the fiercest: all pride begins in the intellect; but there is a special pride of intellect—a pride that begins there, grows there, becomes the relentless despot there, fixes its throne firmly there, rules with iron sway every thought and feeling and word and action, hates and defies the world it cannot conquer, hides itself from God and forgets him, or perhaps hates and defies him too.

Ascetic writers — the true philosophers of the heart, who have penetrated into its deepest recesses, and laid them open in the clearest light — tell us, what all experience confirms, that the specific remedy against pride is to accustom oneself to acts of humiliation on the precise point which the passion has chosen for its stronghold. One act of sincere humiliation, for the purpose of overcoming pride and acquiring humility, is more directly efficacious than any other remedy: it strikes the enemy to the very heart with a single blow.\* Now faith is the humiliation of the intellect: for by faith we believe what we do not know, on the authority of another: we submit our intellect to his. Faith, then, brings down the pride of intellect, and, if the doctrine believed be moreover a mystery, brings it down to the very dust. To believe openly, and to believe most firmly, a doctrine even whose possibility mere reason is unable to demonstrate positively; this is an outward, inward, absolute, profound confession, in the presence of God and man, of the feebleness of our intellect beside that of the All-knowing.

\* ST. ALPHONS. LIGUORI, *Selva*, P. 2, Instr. 6, n. 11. CLAUD. AQUAVIVA, *Industriæ*, etc., C. 7, n. 5, 6, etc. etc.

99. III. It is strange, but it is true, that there is a tendency in the human mind, when kept to itself undisciplined by faith, to persuade itself that it has attained or may attain by its own energies the knowledge of all truth; that beyond the circle of what it can, or fancies that it can by its own energies attain, nothing lies. It is a tendency of the mind to deify itself, and is in truth a particular form or offshoot of the pride of intellect we have just been speaking of. "And you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil". Hence atheism, pantheism, deism, fichteism, hermesianism, and the rest. The atheist rejects the existence of God, because he admits no truth which reason cannot comprehend: what is incomprehensible to him is not true. The deist rejects all truths which reason cannot discover; for to him there is no truth beyond the sphere of reason. And so on of the rest.

Of course I do not mean that infidelity in its several forms is not traceable to other and deeper sources than intellectual perversion: but I am now concerned only with its intellectual origin. The revelation of mysteries seems to check this tendency: for it is of course supposed to be accompanied with decisive evidences of its coming from God, and, by disclosing the mysteries themselves,

teaches that there are truths which reason can neither discover nor comprehend.

100. IV. The revelation of mysteries teaches that there are truths regarding the infinitely perfect Being in himself or in his works, which we must wait for a future and a higher life to know more fully. "We see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known". I do not contemplate the case of men like Shelley, disbelieving in God and hating the very idea. I suppose the soul knowing God and believing in him, also rightly disposed towards him: for no truth, no gift of Heaven, natural or supernatural, will produce its fruit in us, if we unsit our minds for the proper reception of it, and close up our hearts against its influence. In a soul rightly disposed the revelation of a mystery kindles the strongest desire to comprehend it more; turns its yearnings towards God, for in his light he hopes to see light. For example, the revelation of the mystery of the Trinity tells us that there is something in God beyond reason's power to conceive — three persons really distinct in one and the same essence; that the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet there are not three

Gods, but one God: that the three persons are equal in all things: that the Father is not made nor created nor begotten, that the Son is not made nor created, but begotten of the Father alone, that the Holy Ghost is not made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding from the Father and the Son. This is revealed to us: we believe but do not comprehend it.

The believer, when he turns his whole mind and heart to the contemplation of this adorable truth, longs with all the energies of both for the fuller knowledge of it. The veil is dark, but he knows there is infinite glory which eye hath not seen behind it. Like the Apostle, he desires to be dissolved and to be with God, that he may see the divine vision, and be filled with knowledge, and drink of the torrent of his pleasure, whom to know more perfectly is to love more ardently. In comparison all the world's knowledge is to him ignorance, its wisdom folly, its light darkness.

I have read in some life of St. Ignatius of Loyola, that often in celebrating mass, when he came to the name of the Trinity, he became suddenly transfixed and wrapt in pure contemplation. I cannot here take for granted his visions or what was supernatural in his ecstasies. But the sensible

phenomena of such occurrences, so far as they rest on credible testimony, I am, according to the laws of historical evidence, justified in supposing. But I do not rest on such extraordinary cases: let us pass them over: whatever there may be said about them, there can be no doubt that among ordinary devout Christians the consideration of the mystery produces the effects above alluded to in a greater or lesser degree. Who has ever read the beautiful antiphons in the office of Trinity Sunday without sharing in these emotions?—"Te invocamus, te laudamus, te adoramus, O beata Trinitas—Libera nos, salva nos, vivifica nos, O beata Trinitas—Charitas Pater est, gratia Filius, communicatio Spiritus Sanctus, O beata Trinitas". The same is true of the Incarnation and other mysteries. I repeat, I do not speak except of the effect produced on those who believe the mystery. How could I? A man is not affected by any doctrine of religion, whether natural or revealed, if he does not believe it or does not consider it. If a man disbelieves in a future life, in Heaven, or Hell, or never thinks of them, they, of course, make no impression on him. Yet these are truths calculated to move the soul to its very depths. No man doubts the certainty of death—doubts that of every human being now on

the face of the Earth, every one will leave this scene for ever and ever in a few years. What thought can be more awful! Yet how many there are whom it never moves, because they never entertain it. I say it is a *fact* that in those who believe mysteries with a true faith, and contemplate them with a devout spirit, they are occasions of the purest and highest of holy feelings. And the deeper the mystery is, the stronger very often will these feelings be: there is a deeper depth of knowledge to penetrate, of glory to behold, of love to share, of beatitude to enjoy. The revelation of mysteries begets love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. The philosopher cannot understand this; it is madness to him. Let him believe, and he will understand: I do not ask him to believe without reason: there is nothing more reasonable than faith.\*

\* A distinguished living infidel, in a recent work, sneers at the manner in which Christians speak of our Lord's weeping at the tomb of Lazarus, as an evidence of extraordinary love such as "no man hath"—as if such signs of emotion were extraordinary in one friend over the grave of another. But the writer should have borne in mind (among other things), that it was a manifestation of love from him whom we believe to be *God* towards one of his *creatures*, the work of his hands. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied himself,

The revelation of mysteries, then, enriches and adorns the mind with a divine knowledge, brings down the proud intellect to a lower—its own proper sphere, lifts up the aspirations of the heart to a higher, and fills it with the love of holy things and of the one Eternal Good.

"Aurea cum quondam spectarem sidera, dixi,  
Astra placent; serva res tibi, Terra, tuas.  
Nunc aliquid visis formosius intuor astris;  
Parcite, sordetis jam prope et Astra mihi".

101. V. It is true what some of the philosophers say, by way of objection, that all religions in the olden time had what they called mysteries, hidden, esoteric doctrines, too deep to teach promiscuously to the multitude: not mysteries properly so called, like the Christian mysteries, but if I may

taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as man"—*Philipp.*, ii. "You call me Master and Lord; and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also", etc.—*John*, xiii. If the Queen were to visit the dying bed of one of her lowest menial servants, and exhibit sympathy even to tears with the poor sufferer, there would be no end to the admiration lavished on the goodness of the royal heart. Yet Queen and servant, what are they—alike dust to dust and ashes to ashes—before the Almighty Lord of all things?

so speak, undesigned imitations of them, pretended mysteries. But I only see in this an evidence of the tendency of human reason, in all its debasement, to admit the existence of truths above itself, to admit its own weakness, to admit the ineffable in God. Reason naturally leads men to faith, by teaching its own limited powers: it led them to faith, but, blinded as it was by passion, it led them blindly and to a false faith. They were right in believing or professing that there was a hidden knowledge: they were wrong in believing that theirs was that knowledge. Reason teaches that there must be truths which can be known only by revelation, whether they are actually revealed or not; reason wedded to our corrupt inclinations begets a false revelation. Philosophy so called denies not only the existence but the necessity of revelation. It contradicts reason more than superstition contradicts reason: for it not only denies a demonstrated fact, but it denies an inherent principle of reason itself. Pure unbelief therefore can have no permanent hold on large masses of men. Whole nations have remained for ages buried in superstition: but there is no example of a whole nation having lost all faith and remaining so. In the great French revolution the latent infidelity of a

small minority—alas! too large—blazed out and consumed all about it. A mountain heap of fuel from the destruction of old political and social systems fed it for a time. It glowed with a foreign heat and shone with a foreign splendour: and then it sank and paled and died out; and men sat chilled and shivering about the dead embers, and began to think of building a new temple out of the ruins of the old, and did build it. There is in mankind a moral hunger for faith, as there is a physical hunger for food. In famine they eat grass and vermin and all loathsome things: where true revelation has not penetrated, or has been through their wickedness trampled down, they make a revelation of their own, and feed their hungry souls with it.

102. THIRDLY: Supposing the existence of mysteries, it is not repugnant to the divine wisdom and goodness to reveal them and require belief in them.

For God actually requires belief in his own existence and attributes, which, as has been shown, are incomprehensible.

What may be further urged in proof of this part will, as I have said, come in more conveniently by way of answer to objections.

§ 3. *Objections to the preceding proposition.*

OBJECTION I.

103. What is contrary to reason cannot be true. But mysteries are contrary to reason: and therefore cannot be true.

ANSWER.

104. To the *first* proposition: What is *really* contrary to *right* reason, that is to reason properly so called, cannot be true: granted. What is apparently contrary to right reason cannot be true: denied: Or again, what is really contrary to false and spurious reason cannot be true: denied.

To the *second* proposition: Mysteries are contrary to spurious reason: granted. They are, in a certain sense, *apparently* contrary to right reason: also granted. They are *really* opposed to right reason: denied.

105. *Answer to first proposition explained and proved.*

I. There are certain principles of reason about the truth of which all men, not sceptics or atheists, are agreed—and with sceptics or atheists I have

nothing to do here, the very nature of the present discussion necessarily presupposing a higher stage of the controversy.\* These principles are either self-evident or clearly deduced from self-evident principles, such as “A thing cannot be at the same time existing and not existing—An effect cannot exist without a cause—The world must have been created—There is but one God”, etc. These truths are either self-evident or solidly proved from self-evident truths, and all theists admit them. Such are what I call principles of right reason.

106. There are other principles which are neither self-evident nor, I maintain, proved solidly from any solid principles; but which are nevertheless held up by some philosophers as indisputable, self-evident, or rigorously demonstrated. Such are “A body cannot be, by the omnipotence of God, in two or more places at once—We are not bound to admit any doctrine not directly demonstrated by reason—All accounts of miracles are false—The Scripture miracles are resolvable into myths or natural occurrences—All records of miracles since the Apostolic age are false—Faith cramps and enervates the natural powers of the mind—A high

\* See Essay on Miracles, Introduction, vol. II., p. 19.

state of civilization is an evidence of the truth of the prevailing religion in the country in which it has grown up—A low state of civilization in any country is an evidence that the religion prevailing there is corrupt", etc. These, which I give only as illustrations, are what I call principles of a spurious reason, or spurious principles of reason.

107. II. A doctrine is but apparently opposed to reason.

1<sup>o</sup>. When the doctrine is misrepresented, is improperly understood. That the supreme worship of *latria* due to God alone should not be rendered to any creature however exalted, is a certain and evident principle of reason. The Catholic doctrine and practice on the worship of the Blessed Virgin Mary is opposed to this principle of reason in the minds of those who think that we yield to her the same honour and adoration which we yield to God, and pray to her exactly as we pray to God. But the opposition is only apparent: for we worship God and pray to him as God, as the Creator and Sovereign Lord of all, the sole Redeemer of the world, the Author and Source of all good: we pray to Mary as a creature, though the first and holiest and most beloved of all God's creatures, the efficacy of whose intercession with him is more powerful

than that of all other creatures, as her willingness to intercede for us is also greater.

2° When the principle itself is understood in a wrong sense, *e. g.* with conditions which reason rejects, or without conditions which reason requires. Thus it is a principle of reason that when God speaks through revelation reason must be silent. If it be meant that reason must be absolutely inactive, that all its functions must be absolutely suspended, this is not true; for reason must examine the evidences of the revelation, and, if these are conclusive, must accept and believe the doctrine, and of course understand it, and may examine it—not now to test its truth, but—to see more and more its full meaning, etc. (*see above, n. 42, 4°*). If it be meant that reason must not question the truth of the doctrine, must silence its cavils and misgivings, must implicitly and without voluntary hesitation believe the doctrine, not as a result of its own investigation or because it is conformable thereto, but on the divine authority; this is true. It is a principle of reason that a knowledge of strange tongues cannot be had without previous application. If any one should say that the statement of the Apostles having so suddenly become possessed of this knowledge, contradicts this principle, he misre-

presents the true sense of the principle, which implies this condition, viz., unless God should infuse the knowledge in a miraculous manner. The fact and the principle are but apparently opposed.

3<sup>o</sup>. When the doctrine is of that kind to which the principle does not apply or cannot be proved to apply. Thus it is a principle of reason that where there are distinct persons there must be so many substances. This is true of created beings: but between the principle and the doctrine of the Trinity the opposition cannot be proved: because it cannot be proved that the principle applies to the infinitely perfect and uncreated, as it applies to the finite creature. Thus there are certain principles of reason by which the velocity of the planets in their orbits is regulated: but it does not follow that the velocity of light is to be estimated by the same principles.

The second and third classes of apparent contradiction might be, perhaps, reduced to one: inasmuch as to apply a principle to cases where it is inapplicable, is very much the same as to apply a principle in a wrong sense.

108. III. A doctrine is really contrary to right reason when the two terms of the proposition

which express it are contradictory: that is, when the essential properties or any one of the essential properties of the thing signified by one of the terms, are repugnant to, contradictory of, the essential properties or any one of the essential properties of the thing signified by the other term. Thus to assert that a circle is square or may be square, is contrary to reason: for the essential property of a circle, that all the points in the circumference are equidistant from a point within called the centre, is repugnant to the idea of a square. So it is contrary to reason that an infinitely perfect being can act unjustly: for infinite perfection in its very idea excludes injustice.

109. IV. A doctrine is not contrary to reason, is according to reason, when reason can demonstrate that the essential attributes of the subject and predicate of the proposition are not repugnant. Thus the proposition which asserts that Napoleon died at Saint Helena is not contrary to reason: for reason can show that there is no incompatibility between the ideas of Napoleon and of dying at Saint Helena.\* So that the three angles of a triangle are

\* Observe that there is a distinction between "contrary to reason" and "contrary to fact": it is contrary to fact that I write

equal to two right angles is not contrary to reason: for reason not only demonstrates that there is no repugnance in the equality, but that it is positively true. If the essential properties of the attribute and subject agree or may agree, the proposition which asserts that they agree or may agree cannot be repugnant to reason.

110. V. If the doctrine be such that reason is unable to demonstrate that the essential properties, or any one of the essential properties of the attribute and subject of the proposition are contradictory, incompatible; and is moreover unable to demonstrate that they are not contradictory; then we cannot say, from mere reason, whether the doctrine is or is not contrary to reason. Reason can pronounce nothing at all about it: the thing is undiscernable by reason: it can be known only from revelation.

111. VI. In order that we can pronounce a doctrine to be contrary to reason, that there is a contradiction in the terms expressing it, we should, it is evident, clearly and surely know the nature of the things denoted by the terms, so as to be able to

this sentence with my hat on my head, but it is not contrary to reason.

pronounce that their properties or any of them are irreconcileable. It is only from a knowledge of these properties that we can pronounce them to be irreconcileable: and if we know not enough of them to be able to pronounce them irreconcileable, of course we cannot pronounce them so. A man cannot by his natural powers see through a mountain: but we would judge very rashly if we concluded that a pure spirit could not see through it. For reason tells us nothing of the natural visual power of a spirit, in what it consists, how it is exercised, or how far it can penetrate. We can say nothing at all on the question.

When, because of its being incomprehensible, we cannot, from mere reason, pronounce on a particular doctrine, whether it is or is not contrary to reason, we say that it is simply *above* reason. As of a human science which an individual is unable to learn or to comprehend, we say that it is above *his* capacity. He is incapable (except on authority) of forming any opinion whatever on the truth or falsehood of the science.

112. *Answer to second proposition (n. 104) explained and proved.*

After the preceding exposition very few words will suffice.

I. I grant that mysteries may be apparently opposed to reason in any or all of the senses above enumerated (*n.* 107): for there is no doctrine which may not be misrepresented, and principles of reason may be misstated or misapplied.

II. Mysteries are really opposed to unsound principles of reason. Such are those combated in the present section, in reference to the general question; and others combated in the discussion on particular mysteries.

III. Mysteries cannot be proved to be really opposed to the true principles of reason. This follows from the very idea of mysteries, and of what is *above reason*, as already explained. Reason cannot pronounce on the truth or falsehood of a mystery from examination of the mystery itself; otherwise it would not be a mystery. Therefore it cannot be proved that it contradicts reason. Thus it is repugnant that in one created being there could be three persons: but our knowledge of the divine essence and of personality in God is so imperfect, that we cannot show the repugnance of three persons in one God.

113. To this it may be replied, that it begs the question: for it supposes that there may be truths

merely above reason and which are not contrary to reason. The infidel calls for a proof of this.

114. I answer that I suppose only what I have already proved, and the proof of which the present objection leaves untouched, viz., that mysteries are possible. The infidel asserts that they contradict reason. I have just shown that he *cannot prove* his assertion. Observe, I have not undertaken to prove the possibility of any *particular* mystery, *e. g.* the Trinity: I have only undertaken to prove the general proposition (*see below, n. 129*): I have proved that mysteries are possible, and that a doctrine is not to be rejected on the pure ground that it is a mystery, *i. e.* on the pure ground that reason cannot prove it by positive arguments to be possible.

115. It may be urged farther that, if this be all we undertake to do, then a false teacher who comes to announce that there are four persons in God, cannot be rejected on the mere ground that his doctrine is contrary to reason.

116. I answer, undoubtedly he cannot be rejected on this ground. Mere reason cannot refute him from the intrinsic repugnance of his doctrine. But 1<sup>o</sup> he does not prove his pretended

revelation, by miracles or otherwise; and reason is bound to reject him on this score, that is not to believe him. If a man tells me that he heard from some one, who heard from some one, that such or such strange unheard of animals had been just discovered in the interior of Africa, I do not believe; not because the thing is physically impossible, nor because it is not a fact, but because the statement is unsupported by testimony. 2<sup>o</sup>. The pretended revelation is contrary to a true revelation proved by overwhelming evidence, and which asserts that there are but three persons in God. I reject the spurious revelation therefore as clearly demonstrated, by the authority of the Christian revelation, to be false. I receive the mysteries of the Christian revelation, because that revelation is *proved* to have come from God: I receive them *solely* on the divine authority. Until God speaks I know not whether they are repugnant or not: when he tells me they are true, all doubt is at an end.

#### OBJECTION II.

117. The human mind feels a natural repugnance to believe what it cannot comprehend. Hence God would, in exacting our assent to

mysteries, impose on us a burden too weighty for our feebleness to bear.

## ANSWER.

118. FIRST: The first proposition, though true, requires explanation and modification.

I. I admit that some men, in whom the pride of intellect or other passions have gained the ascendancy, feel the strongest aversion to whatever is not according to their own preconceived theories or desires, whether the doctrine be comprehensible or not.

119. II. As mysteries form a part of religion; as the revelation of them is joined with a system of duties restrictive of our natural liberty, and adverse to our natural propensities; as both are inseparably united together in our conception, and indeed in the reality, forming parts of the same whole, and challenging together our implicit obedience of intellect and of will; undoubtedly our nature, wounded and corrupted as it is, naturally revolts against them. But the repugnance is less to admitting the mystery in itself and as a mystery, than to admitting it with its accompanying body of laws prohibitory and preceptive. Hence men believe, without any or without much difficulty,

many truths unconnected with duty or not apprehended as connected with duty, which they by no means comprehend.

120. III. The natural repugnance is to admit this or that particular mystery. I very much doubt whether it would be true to say that there is a natural repugnance among men generally to admit the general doctrine that there are mysteries, or that it is probable or possible that there are mysteries (*see above, n. 101*). I mean that I doubt the existence of such repugnance to the doctrine *per se*. I of course admit it, when the doctrine presents itself as part of a stringent religious code, according to what has been said in the preceding paragraph.

121. SECONDLY: I deny the second proposition.

I. The principle of the objection would come more or less against the imposition of any law whatever. For every law properly so called is a restriction in some way of our liberty, against which we are inclined by nature to rebel. Even a law commanding us to adopt a uniform line of conduct which otherwise we would be inclined, if left entirely free, to prefer, is, by the very fact of *binding* us to adopt it, irksome to nature. *Nitimur in vetitum.*

122. II. The repugnance is not insuperable, as is evident from the fact that so many millions of the most highly cultivated, as well as of the ordinary mass of mankind, do actually believe mysteries. Again, God will not oblige us to accept mysteries, without supplying us with sufficient means of overcoming whatever repugnance we may feel against them. *First*, we have divine grace. But of this I cannot say more here than that I am justified in supposing that it *can* be given; and in asserting that, if necessary, it will be given. *Secondly*, we have reason itself, which clearly tells us, as we have seen, that mysteries are not to be rejected because they are mysteries; nay, that, if they are revealed to us with sufficient evidence of credibility, we are bound to accept them. *Thirdly*, when God reveals mysteries, he always actually furnishes abundant evidences of the truth of the revelation.

## OBJECTION III.

123. A mystery is not only incomprehensible, but unintelligible. Therefore God cannot reveal it: nor can we be bound to believe it.

## ANSWER.

124. I have explained the difference between  
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comprehending and understanding a doctrine; and I have explained the different ways in which we can be said to understand a doctrine.

I. There is no mystery which cannot be understood in one or more of these ways. Take as an example that which is perhaps the most incomprehensible of all revealed mysteries—the Trinity. We know what a divine person is not; we know that there is an analogy between it and created person; we know that it is divine, and therefore in sublimity and beauty transcending all creation, and on which the angels desire to look, and look entranced for all eternity. So when we say that in the sacrament of the Eucharist Christ is present truly, really, and substantially, and not merely in sign, or figure, or virtually and by effect, the doctrine is incomprehensible, but very intelligible.

125. II. This is practically admitted by opponents themselves of mysteries, in their mode of impugning particular mysteries. For, while some of them assert the general proposition, that all mysteries are unintelligible, they nevertheless combat the particular mystery by a variety of arguments, sometimes very acute and plausible: they endeavour to show that it is repugnant to this or

that principle of reason. Now to direct an argument, especially to carry on a sustained argument, against a proposition, necessarily implies in the objector a persuasion that the proposition has a meaning. No one argues, in truth no rational man can argue, against a meaningless proposition, which is nothing more than a series of mere words. It would be as reasonable to reply to the lowing of a cow or the neighing of a horse. The sounds emitted by these animals have no meaning, and therefore cannot be called either true or false. When a man rejects a mysterious doctrine as false, he by the very fact admits that it has a meaning.

## OBJECTION IV.

126. Reason is the faculty whereby we understand truth; and we have no other faculty for this purpose. Whatever we know is known only by reason. But if mysteries are *above* reason, how can it be said to understand them?

## ANSWER.

127. Mysteries are above reason in the sense that reason cannot *comprehend* them. They are not above reason in the sense that reason cannot

*understand* them. This is sufficiently clear from what has been already said, and needs no further developement.

#### OBJECTION V.

128. If mysteries are above reason, then mere reason cannot prove anything regarding them. But it has been attempted to prove their possibility from mere reason.

#### ANSWER.

129. I. We have proved from mere reason the general proposition, that "Mysteries are possible". This proposition is not itself a mystery, is in no way above reason: on the contrary, it is quite within the province of reason to understand, to discover, and to comprehend it. II. Reason can prove the truth of a particular mystery by proving the truth of the revelation which unfolds it: and this it proves from the motives of credibility which accompany the revelation—miracles, fulfilment of prophecies, supernatural effects of the revelation, etc.

CHAPTER III.

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## PROVINCE OF FAITH.

130. FAITH has been already defined in its generic sense, and the nature of the assent of faith, as distinguished from assent resting on intrinsic evidence, explained (*chap. I.*). It has also been remarked, that when we speak of faith as distinguished from reason, we mean divine faith, and we take reason as using all the means it can lay hold on, intrinsic evidence and the extrinsic evidence of purely human authority, the evidence of revelation being alone excluded (*ibid.*). A somewhat fuller explanation of the nature and province of divine faith than could have been conveniently given at an earlier stage of the discussion, is necessary for our purpose, and may be appropriately introduced here.

131. I cannot reasonably believe any doctrine, as has been already stated (*chap. I.*), without a reason or motive for believing it. The first question is *why* I give the assent of faith to such or such

a doctrine, why I believe it as an article of faith? what is my *motive* for believing it? I answer, the authority of God revealing it. This answer I thus explain.

132. First, there is the revelation of the doctrine. I, of course, do not mean that the revelation must be made directly to each individual in order that he should be made to believe. It is made immediately to one or more whom God selects for the purpose. By them it is announced and communicated to others. Through these it is communicated from mind to mind, from people to people, from generation to generation, in the various ways in which any doctrine may be circulated and transmitted; by writing, by oral tradition, by rites and usages, etc. God may decree that the revelation shall be perpetuated to the end of time unadulterated and entire: and for this purpose he may establish a body of men with perpetual succession to preserve the revelation in its purity and integrity, to propagate and teach it: and he may impart to this body a permanent extraordinary assistance for the sure discharge of these functions. I say he *may* do all this: Catholics assert that he has done so: but I here assert not the fact, but the possibility of the fact. In the supposition that God made no

such extraordinary provision, succeeding generations receive the revelation from those that preceded them, through the ordinary channels of transmission and with the evidences, if such exist, that it has been faithfully transmitted. Even under an established infallible authority the natural means of receiving knowledge are not superseded, but their testimony is watched over, and the fallacy of its report in certain circumstances guarded against: as nature is not destroyed by grace, but assisted and elevated.\* The first thing, however, is the proposal of the doctrine as revealed.

133. The next step is a firm and rational persuasion that the doctrine is revealed. This persuasion is grounded on the evidences that prove the revelation to be from God. The evidences are

\* An infallible authority having been actually established, it is the ordinary channel through which the faithful are to know what is or is not revealed. It is the *proponent* of the revelation. Whatever it teaches as revealed is of *Catholic* faith: what it does not propose or define is not of *Catholic* faith. It teaches, however, in many ways, which it would be quite foreign to the matter in hand to explain here. It will be evident to the reader that I could not with propriety introduce questions of this sort into a discussion like the present. I must even abstract altogether from the existence of a Church properly so called, and consider faith antecedent to or irrespective of any such institution.

various, such as miracles wrought by those through whom the revelation is first communicated, or by others their immediate disciples or successors in the faith; the miraculous propagation of the religion; sanctity and sanctifying influence of the doctrine revealed; etc., etc. They prove that the revelation which professes to be from God is really from God. They supply a reasonable and sure motive for my believing that it is from God: and on this motive I justly believe with firm conviction that it is from God.\*

134. With regard to those who do not witness the miracles wrought at the first promulgation of the revelation in proof of its divine origin, the evidences of the revelation may be brought home to them in the clearest and most convincing light, in either or both of the two following ways. *First:* There may be permanent evidences, continued from age to age, always existing and appealing to men's minds, public, striking, sufficient for conviction. Such, a Catholic would say, are the evidences for the truth of the Catholic Church, in the abiding Unity in Catholicity which marks her out from all sects that exist or ever have existed; or in her final

\* See Vol. II. Essay on Miracles, chap. v.

triumphs over all obstacles, against all merely human calculation; or in her power of constantly extending her empire over the hearts of unbelievers, etc., etc. These are evidences which are always contemporary and, we say, convincing.

*Secondly:* The evidences which are furnished by events long past, such as the miracles wrought by our Lord and the Apostles, the early and miraculous diffusion of the Christian religion, are, like other great historical facts, transmitted through human testimony. Such evidences are as certain, and may be made to us as certain, as any other the plainest and most indisputable facts of history.

The grounds for believing at this day that the Christian revelation was established by miracles, are as strong and at least as accessible to the mass of men, as the grounds for believing in the existence of Julius Cæsar.\*

The second step, then, is a perception of the evidences of revelation (evidences or motives of credibility, as we call them), and the conviction, grounded thereon, that the revelation is really from God. Evidence of the truth of the revelation is always necessary for divine faith.†

\* See Essay on Miracles, n. 67, etc.

† “Non enim crederet, nisi videret ea esse credenda vel propter

135. Observe, 1<sup>o</sup> when I say that evidence is always necessary, I do not mean that *external* evidences, such as we have in abundance for the truth of the Christian religion, are always necessary. They are manifestly the ordinary and common evidences (witnessed or conveyed to those who are not witnesses by testimony): but undoubtedly God may enlighten the mind to see the credibility of a revelation, without any external proofs. In this case the illumination of the intellect is itself the evidence.

2<sup>o</sup>. It is not necessary that the evidences or the testimony to the evidences should be the same or equally strong for all. Illiterate and simple men may be *reasonably* convinced by evidences or the testimony of evidences which would not be convincing or so convincing to more acute and cultivated minds. Such is the actual condition of human nature, and the actual system established by God, according to which doctrines communicated on authority, whether human or divine, have been received from the beginning of the world. The

evidentiam signorum, vel propter aliquid hujusmodi"—ST. THOMAS,  
2. 2. Q. 1. A. 4. *ad secund.* SYLVIUS, *ibid.* Quær. 3. SUAREZ,  
De Fide, D. 4. S. 5. n. 8. LUGO, D. 5. n. 3. WIGGERS, Q. 1.  
n. 111. etc. etc.

evidences of certainty in all matters resting on authority have always been absolute or relative, and will continue to be so to the end.\*

\* A recent French author of a popular work on theology puts the doctrine, that a consideration of the miraculous evidences of revelation is not always necessary, in a light which might easily mislead the uninitiated reader. He does not say in express terms that a revelation may be reasonably received, and its doctrines believed with the assent of divine faith, without any evidences whatever even relatively sufficient. But a reader of the class alluded to would certainly be very liable to interpret his language in this sense. The writer's proofs are singularly unhappy. For example, he says: "When Paul and Barnabas went to Antioch in Pisidia, they wrought no miracle. They went twice to the synagogue. The Jews who wished to discuss were not converted: others more humble and docile received the faith".

Now, in the *first* place, the Apostles did a great deal more than go *twice to the synagogue*. Though it is not recorded that any miracles were wrought by either of them on the occasion, yet St. Paul made a lengthened discourse to the Jews, extending through twenty-six verses (*Acts*, xiii. 16—41); which was certainly something more than *going twice to the synagogue*. In this discourse he appeals to the great miracle of the Resurrection of our Lord (*v.* 30), and he appeals moreover to the evidence of testimony for the truth of the miracle (*v.* 31), and further still he appeals to the evidence of prophecy for the same miracle and for the truth of the Christian revelation (*vv.* 32—37); an argument peculiarly intelligible and forcible with the Jews.

Certainly it is a very gross misrepresentation to insinuate that the Apostles furnished no other evidence than going twice to the synagogue.

136. The mind being convinced that the revelation has come from God, that is, that it is God who speaks, yields a firm assent to the revealed doctrine, believes it to be true on the authority of God. For now, knowing that it is God who speaks, and knowing moreover that he is infinite wisdom and cannot be deceived, and that he is infinite truth and cannot deceive, I therefore believe what he says: that is, I believe on his authority. For this it is that constitutes the authority of any witness to fact or doctrine — that he is not deceived or deceiving. In this consists the authority of human testimony. But God not only is not, but cannot be, deceived or deceiving.

137. If a statement is brought to me by a person whom I know to be veracious, incapable of telling as certain what he knew or suspected to be a falsehood, but whom I know to be at the same

In the *second* place, the Jews were not converted, not inasmuch as they refused to obey without evidence of miracles, but because, like so many of their brethren who witnessed the miracles of our Lord himself, they in their blindness and hardness of heart rejected the clearest and most overwhelming evidence (*v. 45*). Unquestionably the evidence of miracles witnessed or attested is not always required: but, as a matter of fact, unquestionably this was *the* evidence appealed to by St. Paul on the foregoing occasion.

time unobservant, near-sighted, over-credulous, easily imposed on, rashly quick in forming his conclusions; I hesitate to believe him or I refuse to believe him, because I do not trust to his *knowledge*; he may be *deceived*. His testimony is not authority.

If another person comes to me whom I know to be observant, acute, cool, not capable of being deceived in the matter he reports on, but whom I know to be regardless of truth, quite ready to tell a lie, if it suits his purpose, or for the mere mischief of the thing, or from a braggart exaggerating turn he has; I do not believe him, because I do not trust his *veracity*; he may be *deceiving* me. His testimony is not authority.

But if the witness be a person whom I know to have ample means of information on the matter he informs me about, to be moreover prudent, acute, and strictly careful of the truth of what he says, I believe him, because I have reasonable ground for believing that he is neither deceived nor deceiving. His testimony is credible. I believe, and the motive, reason, ground of my belief, are his *knowledge* and *veracity*. So as regards divine faith, my motive or reason for believing are the knowledge

and veracity, that is, the authority, of the witness—God.

138. It is evident, then, that, though there is nothing more reasonable than faith, yet reason or human authority cannot in any case constitute the motive of divine faith, or form any part thereof. For if I believe a doctrine or fact *because* reason demonstrates the truth of the former, or history testifies to the truth of the latter, my motive of belief is the demonstration of reason or the testimony of history, and not the authority of God. To the question, *Why* do you believe? I cannot answer, because God says the doctrine or the fact is true, but because reason or human testimony tells me it is true. In like manner, if I believe on the divine authority *and* human reason, it is not true to say that I believe on the divine authority; for I believe on it and on something else, and therefore my assent is not one of faith, but, if I may so speak, of half faith and half knowledge.

139. From the preceding exposition it also follows, that the *motive or motives of credibility* and the *motive of the assent of faith* are altogether distinct, and that the former enters in no way into the latter. The motives of credibility are the evidences which prove that the revelation is from

God: the motive of faith is the reason why I believe the truths thus revealed. The motives of credibility are the reason why I believe that it is God who says so and so: the motive of faith is the reason why I believe what God says. This will be conceived more clearly, if we make the impossible supposition, that God could deceive or be deceived. In this supposition, though the motives of credibility prove that God has spoken, yet I want a motive for believing firmly what he says. So, to illustrate the thing from human faith, if I have conclusive proof [motives of credibility] for believing that such or such a statement has come from John, this is no reason or ingredient of a reason for my believing that the statement is true; it is only a reason for my believing that John is the author of the statement; so that if I know him to be a person of unquestionable knowledge and veracity, I believe, and these qualities in him are my reason and my sole reason for believing. The motives of credibility, and the conviction or judgment of credibility which they beget, are a preliminary to faith, but they are not, in whole or in part, the motive of faith.

140. It follows also that, though the motives of credibility render the revelation evidently credible, they do not make the truths revealed in themselves

evident. This is sufficiently clear from what I have said on the nature of Intrinsic Evidence, in the first chapter of this essay.

141. It is also sufficiently clear that the same truth, *e. g.* the existence of God, may be known both from reason and revelation; and that two persons may believe it, one on the evidence of reason, the other on the authority of revelation; or that the same person may, on distinct occasions, believe on both motives.

142. We have seen what the motive of faith is. We have now to inquire what is the object of faith? that is, what are the truths to be believed? According to Catholic theology, two conditions are required for a true act of divine faith. The first is, that the doctrine be revealed: the second is, that the person believing be certain that it is revealed\*.

143. As to the first condition†, it does not appear to me that it can be clearly proved *from mere reason* that a man who, through involuntary error, believes a doctrine to be revealed which is not only not revealed but not true, cannot make an

\* Concil. Trident. Sess, 6. c. 2, in fine. Prop. 21 *damnat. ab INNOCENT XI.*

† SUAREZ, D. 3. S. 13. LUGO, D. 4. S. 6. HAUNOLD Theolog. Speculat. Lib. 3. n. 229.

act of divine faith in that doctrine. Nor is it necessary for us to assert this, or to enter into the question at all, in arguing with infidels. It is enough for us, in our controversy with this class of persons, to assert that, in order to make an act of divine faith, I must, 1<sup>o</sup> apprehend the doctrine as known to me from revelation. For if I believe it as known from reason, my motive of belief is not the authority of God but reason. I must, 2<sup>o</sup> have solid grounds for knowing it to be revealed: otherwise I act unreasonably in believing on the divine authority what I have not sufficient grounds for believing to rest on that authority.

144. There are certain erroneous theories regarding the object and assent of faith put forward in our own day by Protestant writers of the highest respectability, some of which have gained a very large acceptance with subsequent writers of the same communion. I shall briefly notice two of these which strike more fatally at the very root of faith: and in doing so I shall, of course, take for granted, what they admit—the truth of the Christian revelation. The first is a theory ascribed\* to

\* I say *ascribed* to him (and by persons of his own Church); for I cannot speak with sufficient confidence from a personal examination

Dr. Hampden, formerly Professor of Theology in Oxford, and now Bishop of Hereford; viz., that nothing is to be received as revealed in Scripture, unless as it lies in Scripture. This theory contradicts both reason and the usage of Scripture itself. It contradicts reason: for in revelation, as in any other communication of truth, it is not the words, as mere combinations of letters or articulate sounds, that are to be considered, but as conveying the sense. And if the sense be exactly the same, the diversity of forms in which it is expressed is utterly indifferent. It is true that the Catholic Church requires that a particular form of phraseology shall be used in the expression or explanation of certain doctrines. But the reason of this is, either that no other form of words will express the doctrine so fitly, or that wily men have used or are likely to use other and ambiguous forms the more securely to insinuate their errors.

The theory contradicts the usage of Scripture. For not only is the same doctrine expressed in different forms in different parts of Scripture, but the same one revelation is sometimes reported in diffe-

of his Bampton Lectures, which I read several years ago, and then not entirely nor very carefully.

rent words by different inspired writers. Thus the form of the consecration of the chalice used by our Lord at the last supper, is quite different, as to the words, in the narratives of St. Matthew and St. Mark, from the form as reported by St. Luke and St. Paul. The former is, "This is my blood of the new testament": the latter is, "This is the chalice, the new testament in my blood". Now it is manifest that Christ did not use both forms of words on the same occasion, though the sense of the form he did use is represented in either.

There are also verbal diversities in what immediately precedes and succeeds the form of the consecration of the chalice. Similar and still greater diversities occur in other parts of Scripture, in reporting our Lord's discourses and sayings. From which it is evident that the inspired writers believed that they communicated the revelation in communicating the sense of it. It would be easy to show also, from creeds, definitions of councils, etc., that this theory is opposed to the mind and practice of the Church from the earliest ages.

145. The second error is that which holds that doubt may coexist with the true Christian faith; that faith, as to its certainty, may be nothing

stronger than opinion; that it may rest on evidence more or less probable, but still merely probable.

This error is refuted, first, by the fact that the evidences of the Christian revelation are decisive, and claim the firmest and most unwavering assent; and that the evidences of the infallible authority of the Church are also certain and decisive. It is refuted, secondly, by the language of the Sacred Scripture in designating and describing faith. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know most certainly that God hath made both Lord and Christ this same Jesus, whom you have crucified"—*Acts*, ii. "For I know whom I have believed, and I am certain that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day"—II. *Tim.*, i. "Do you believe that I can do this unto you? They say to him: Yea, Lord—Repent, and believe the gospel—Fear not, only believe—He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved—O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken—His disciples believed in him—They believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had said", etc., etc. (*Matt.*, ix.; *Mark*, i., v., xvi.; *Luke*, xxiv.; *John*, ii.).

In all these passages, and innumerable others might be cited, it is plain that the word *believe*

signifies not a doubting, hesitating assent, but a firm, full assent.

146. There is another most serious and fatal error, which I have often met in the writings of lay Protestants of the highest literary rank, but which I do not recollect to have seen in any recent English theological publication by a professed theologian or clerical dignitary of the Established Church. The error is, that, faith being an act of the understanding, and not of the will, is not a free act; that, as a distinguished orator and writer has expressed it, a man is no more accountable for his faith, than for his stature or the colour of his hair. Sir James Mackintosh, in the section on David Hume, in his Dissertation on Ethical Philosophy, uses language which pretty clearly implies this doctrine.

This error is refuted by the following few and brief observations—to which others might be added. I. The motives of credibility, however powerful, supply to us evidence only of a *moral kind*: evidence resulting from a consideration of many details and individual elements of belief, each of which by itself, or all of which together, in some other conceivable hypothesis might be, or might be conceived to be, insufficient to establish as certain

the point in question. From this very circumstance moral evidence is exposed to difficulties which the mind—if so disposed, if unwilling to admit the doctrine sustained by this evidence—may consider apart from the evidence, may rest upon, may mould for itself into specious arguments on the other side. Thus there are two things which prevent moral evidence from *forcing* belief: first, the positive nature of the evidence in itself, which presents itself like an extended and complicated surface to the mind; secondly, its liability to be opposed by innumerable cavils. Take for example the evidence of testimony—suppose the testimony of the martyrs to the Christian revelation. The facts are to me indisputable, and the inference perfectly sound: there is not a flaw in the whole argument. Yet see with what consummate skill Gibbon deals with both facts and inference for his own purpose. Nothing can be more unfair than his narrative and his logic: yet he was one of the ablest and most learned men of his day. Any one so disposed may direct his mind through the same course of misrepresentation and sophistry, and arrive at the same conclusion, and rest satisfied with it—if rest there can be in such a conclusion.

On the other hand, take first truths—“The

whole is greater than a part", or "Two things equal to a third are equal to each other": or take truths clearly proved by rigid mathematical demonstration, such as that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. Here are propositions equally true in all conceivable hypotheses, true from the immutable essence of the things. Human testimony is actually a sure proof of facts, when certain conditions exist on the part of the fact and the testimony. But this is not essentially so: it involves no essential repugnance that it should be otherwise. It is certainly or, if you will, essentially so, in the present order of things, under the existing providence of God: but in a different order, under a different providence, it might be different. Even the physical evidence of the motives of credibility which they have who, *e. g.* witness the miracles wrought to prove a revelation, is widely different from the metaphysical evidence of first truths or mathematical propositions evidently demonstrated. There is still room, though less room, for cavil: as is evident from the example of the Jews, who witnessed the miracles of our Lord, and yet refused to believe in him.

147. II. The motives of credibility, though they prove that the revelation is from God, and

therefore prove that the doctrines of the revelation ought to be believed, do not make these doctrines in the least more *evident in themselves* than they were before. The doctrine of the Trinity is, after the revelation, credible to me in the highest degree, and I am bound to believe it and do believe it; but it is not more *evident* to me than if it had been stated as a conjecture and not as revealed. The same is true of revealed doctrines discoverable by reason. In believing them as dogmas of faith I believe them, as has been already shown, solely on authority, and in no degree on the intrinsic evidence. So far as I believe the doctrine by faith I do not *see* it: and therefore, so far as it is an object of faith, the obscurity in which it presents itself to my mind from my not seeing it, always continues. Consequently the nature of doctrines of faith, as such, prevents my mind from being compelled to believe it, as I am compelled to believe first truths. My will may lead my intellect to take up the obscurity of the doctrine and turn it into an argument against its truth.

148. III. I may by an act of my free will keep my mind from any consideration whatever of the doctrine or its evidences; or I may turn it away, after a cursory consideration, to some other

object; and I may do either without a motive even apparently reasonable.

149. IV. Revealed doctrines, as they form a part of revealed religion (*n.* 119), are opposed to our corrupt prejudices and desires. And these not only prevent the mind from being forced to embrace the doctrines, but very often most strongly impel in the opposite direction. It is needless to enlarge farther on this remark, which is proved by experience not only in reference to revealed doctrine, but in reference to any doctrine whatsoever which is opposed to our passions or our interest.

150. Many other most important and interesting disquisitions on the province and properties of faith might be introduced here, and what has formed the preceding matter of this chapter might be greatly enlarged. But enough has been said for the specific purpose of this essay. I shall add one observation intended exclusively for the instruction of such of my Catholic readers as may require instruction on the point.

I have said that no doctrine can be a dogma of divine faith, unless it be revealed; and that no doctrine can be an article of *Catholic* faith, unless it be moreover proposed as such by the Church. Now the caution I wish to address to such of my

readers as need it is this: that we are not to conclude that, because a proposition is not defined as *of faith*, that is as *immediately revealed*, by the Church, it is therefore a matter of free opinion. The Church has received infallible authority not only to define what is revealed and what is directly opposed to revelation; but moreover, 1<sup>o</sup>. to define, as certain, inferences evolved by reason from dogmas of faith, and to proscribe the opposite errors: 2<sup>o</sup>. to proscribe doctrines which, though not formally opposed to the aforesaid inferences, are nevertheless, in different ways or degrees, pernicious or dangerous: 3<sup>o</sup>. to define facts (we call them *dogmatic facts*), the power of defining which is necessary in order to preserve the integrity of doctrine or of morals, the purity of worship, or the unity and authority of the Church. Such facts are, that such a book contains sound or unsound doctrine, that such a Council is or is not ecumenical, etc. The definitions of the Church on such matters are not dogmas of faith; but they are infallibly true, and to be received as such on the authority of the Church, guided by the assistance of the Holy Ghost. I am merely stating the doctrine as succinctly as possible, not proving it.

CHAPTER IV.

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## MUTUAL HARMONY OF REASON AND FAITH.

151. By the mutual harmony of Reason and Faith I mean not only, 1<sup>o</sup>. a negative harmony—that is, that reason is in no way opposed to faith, and that faith is in no way opposed to reason; but also, 2<sup>o</sup>. a positive harmony—that is, that reason in several ways helps to faith, and enforces and illustrates it, and that faith in several ways assists, elevates, and enlarges reason. The whole scope of the three preceding chapters clearly establishes, or supplies materials for clearly establishing, these propositions. Little more now remains, than to expand, or point, or briefly recapitulate, what has been already said.

§ 1. *Negative harmony of Reason and Faith.*

152. The exposition which has been given of the idea of intrinsic and extrinsic evidence, of the idea of reason and faith; the delineation and proofs of their respective properties, powers, and provinces; the answers to objections against the several

doctrines laid down, all constitute a positive and direct proof of this harmony. The proof indeed is so circumstantial and decisive, and has been entered into at such length, that, but for the sake of methodical arrangement, I would not think of introducing even an allusion to it a second time and in a distinct section. There is nothing opposed to reason in the doctrines or the revelation of the doctrines which reason itself can discover. There is nothing opposed to reason in the doctrines or the revelation of doctrines which reason cannot discover. There is nothing opposed to reason in those doctrines of the latter class which we call mysteries, or in the revelation of those doctrines. Now these comprise all kinds of true revelation and all kinds of doctrine revealed. There is therefore a negative harmony between faith and reason.

### § 2. *Positive harmony of Reason and Faith.*

153. FIRST: *Reason in several ways helps to faith, enforces and illustrates it.*

I. Reason shows the actual and absolute limits of its own powers in the discovery of truth, and thereby shows the necessity of revelation.

II. Reason is able to see the evidences of revelation, to weigh them, to decide on their force, to

prove that they are conclusive, and that the revelation which they establish ought to be admitted as a fact clearly proved. Reason therefore proves the perfect reasonableness of faith, just as unanswerably as it proves the reasonableness of assent to any proposition resting on irrefragable authority. Thus reason can ascertain the truth of a miraculous fact, whether witnessed or communicated through testimony from the original witnesses; just as it can ascertain the truth of any other sensible and important fact. Reason can see and prove the connexion between the miracle and the revelation. Reason can prove that the miracle is sure evidence of the truth of the revelation it is wrought to prove.\* What is said of the evidence of miracles, applies to other evidences.

III. Reason can show not only the reasonableness of admitting the revelation; but, having received the revelation, it can moreover show—positively or negatively, as has been already explained—the reasonableness of the doctrine itself. It can illustrate the doctrine from a thousand analogies in the order of natural truth, and explain the brighter glories of the yet unseen from the pale

\* See Essay on Miracles.

streaks that dimly illumine its own twilight world of knowledge.

Thus the revealed idea of the Church may be illustrated, as indeed it is in the book of revelation itself illustrated, from the shepherd and his flock, from the firm foundation rock and the house built on it, from the field of tares and wheat, from the seamless garment, and the fisherman's net, and the nuptial feast, and the one body, and the one house, and the one city, and the one kingdom, and soforth.

153. *SECONDLY: Faith in several ways assists and elevates reason, and enlarges its sphere of speculation.*

I. The truths which reason can discover, revelation discovers more surely, impresses more deeply. In relation to these truths it awakens the dormant, and quickens the relaxed, and concentrates the wandering energies of reason; it fixes attention, and commands belief. Thus the doctrine of the existence of one God, or of a future life of rewards and punishments, when revealed, at once supersedes conjecture and opinion, takes firm possession of the intellect, enters into it, and abides there.

A boy who has not seen his father from infancy, rarely thinks of him and but coldly: but when the

latter returns from distant lands as if from the grave, the natural feelings of the son burst into life and die no more. So when God reveals himself to the soul, its natural powers are called into activity, and its eyes are opened.

II. The revelation of truths which reason cannot discover is like the teaching of a new science and a new language. Hitherto reason was too blind or too careless to see, or too proud to confess, its own ignorance. Now it is to its former self as the learned man is to the untaught boy. What stores of knowledge has he not acquired! He knows the history of distant regions and ancient times; the wisdom of many wise men to enlighten him, and their follies to warn him. He knows the secrets of nature and the inventions of art, the map of Heaven and of Earth, the laws that regulate the stars and the tides.

So reason, taught by revelation, soars into higher regions of knowledge, which it could not penetrate or approach before. As in actual sciences knowledge rises above knowledge, and the mind grows and expands and strengthens as it advances from step to step, from a sum in arithmetic to the last discoveries of Herschel; so revelation lifts it higher still, increases its power of vision, and widens the

sphere thereof. The acquisition of knowledge increases the power of acquiring. The mind in becoming more learned becomes more able; this is peculiarly the case with regard to sacred knowledge.

III. The mind not only acquires the new truths formally contained in the revelation, it also is able to educe from these, by the help of reason, inferences and speculations without end. Theology is an exhaustless science. The many doctrines of revelation are arranged therein by reason in beautiful sequence and harmony; they are many, and they make one whole; as the members of the Church are many, and make one body. As Christ, the true vine, bore unnumbered branches; so they, the stock of holy truth, send out branches on every side—the true tree of knowledge, in which whatever doctrine abideth not, shall be cast forth and wither.

But I fear I am only going on amplifying what has been sufficiently said or suggested already.

*Supremacy of Saint Peter,*

AND OF HIS SUCCESSORS THE BISHOPS OF ROME.



“SUPER soliditate Petræ fundatam a Christo Ecclesiam, Petrumque singulari Christi munere præ cæteris electum, qui vicaria potestate Apostolici Chori Princeps existeret, totiusque adeo gregis pascendi, Fratres consirmandi, totoque orbe ligandi ac solvendi summam curam auctoritatemque in Successores omni ævo propagandam susciperet, *Dogma Catholicum* est, quod ore Christi acceptum, perenni Patrum prædicatione traditum ac defensum, Ecclesia universa omni ætate sanctissime retinuit, sœpiusque adversus Novatorum errores Summorum Pontificum, Conciliorumque decretis confirmavit”—*Constitutio Pii VI.*, 28 Novemb. 1786.

#### TRANSLATION.

“That the Church was founded by Christ on the firmness of the Rock; and that, by the singular favour of Christ, Peter was selected above the rest to be by vicarious power the Prince of the Apostolic Choir; and therefore to receive the supreme charge and authority, to be perpetuated through his Successors for all time, of feeding the whole

flock, of confirming his brethren, and of binding and loosing over the whole Earth—is a *Catholic Dogma*, which, having been received from the mouth of Christ and handed down and defended by the constant teaching of the Fathers, the Universal Church has always held most inviolably, and frequently confirmed against the errors of Innovators by the decrees of Sovereign Pontiffs and Councils”—*Constitution of Pius the Sixth.*

TRANSLATION OF THE DEFINITION OF THE COUNCIL  
OF FLORENCE, PREFIXED TO THIS VOLUME.

I believe that “The Holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff have the Primacy over the whole Earth; and that the Roman Pontiff himself is the Successor of the Blessed Prince of the Apostles; and that he is the True Vicar of Christ, and the Head of the whole Church, and the Father and Doctor of all Christians; and that to Him in Blessed Peter was given by our Lord Jesus Christ full power of Feeding, Ruling, and Governing the Universal Church”—*Council of Florence.*

## **Supremacy**

OF SAINT PETER AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

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1. I UNDERTAKE to prove, in the following pages, the Supremacy of St. Peter and his Successors, as defined by the Council of Florence in the words cited on the title pages of these volumes, and by Pius the Sixth in the extract prefixed to this article. I undertake moreover to evolve and prove at least the more practically important of the general doctrines which are immediately and necessarily implied in the supremacy thus established,

The sources of proof are twofold — the Sacred Scriptures, and the monuments of Ecclesiastical Tradition. Again, the proofs from Scripture are of two classes. The first comprises those texts in which the supremacy is distinctly and expressly promised or conferred: the second comprises the numerous passages in which it is supposed or implied. In the former the doctrine is formally revealed: in the latter, at least when all the pas-

sages alluded to are considered together and with their cumulative force, the doctrine is virtually or equivalently revealed. In our division of form we shall follow this division of matter.

2. I admit that the perpetuation of the primacy is not declared in *express terms* in any text of Scripture, as the actual primacy of St. Peter is declared. Nevertheless I have combined them both in the same proposition, and I shall establish them both—the proper order and sequence of doctrine and proof being observed—in the same series of argument.

I am led to adopt this arrangement—for it is after all a mere matter of method—partly because the continuation of the primacy, though not expressly *stated* in Scripture, is, as we shall see, *collected from* Scripture by strictly logical and solid inference—the primacy of Peter lying plainly on the surface, the succession lying as it were under it, but essentially connected with it. Partly because in the evidences of Tradition I see the two things so frequently identified, that many of the most powerful testimonies for either are equally powerful for the other—“I am united with your Holiness, that is, with the chair of Peter; on this rock I know the Church was built—Peter presides over

the Church of Rome—Peter has spoken through Leo", etc., etc. Partly because the primacy of St. Peter is the same as that of his successors, neither more nor less. He was the first Pope, but he was not, so to speak, more Pope than they. As Pope he was to Linus just what Linus was to Anacletus. The succession of the primacy is not a succession of less to greater or of dissimilar things, but a continuation of the same thing. Wherefore, finally, such being the state of the case, there is a manifest convenience in being able, in a somewhat popular essay like the present, to put the whole doctrine with its evidences as much as possible in one view before the mind.

3. It is hardly necessary to tell the reader, what he must quickly perceive, that I adopt the *analytical* method. That is, I commence without supposing any thing beyond the data agreed upon between my opponents and myself. I proceed to analyze the evidences which these data supply: the result of the analysis will give the doctrine I propose to establish.

## BOOK I.

## PROOFS FROM SCRIPTURE.

## PART I. THE PRIMACY PROMISED AND CONFERRED.

4. THERE are three celebrated texts: the first is (to take them in the order of time) from the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew; the second is from the twenty-second of St. Luke; the third is from the last of St. John. Each of these furnishes distinct arguments, and the first at least two distinct arguments for the primacy.\* To each of these texts I shall devote a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER I.

## ARGUMENTS FROM MATTHEW, XVI.

5. "And Jesus came into the quarters of Cesarea Philippi; and he asked his disciples saying,

\* I use the words *Primacy* and *Supremacy* as meaning the same thing. What that thing is in the Sovereign Pontiff is the object of this essay to show.

Whom do men say that the son of man is? But they said, Some John the Baptist, and other some Elias, and others Jeremias or one of the prophets. Jesus saith to them, But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in Heaven. And I say to thee, Thou art Peter [*Rock*]; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon Earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven"—*Matth.*, xvi. 13—19.\*

*Μακαρίος ει, Σιμων Βαρ Ιωνα, δτι σαρξ και ἀιμα ουκ απεκαλυψε σοι, αλλ' ὁ Πατηρ μου ὁ εν τοις ουρυνοις. Καγω δε σοι λεγω, δτι συ ει Πετρος και επι ταυτη τη πετρᾳ οικοδομησω μου την εκκλησιαν και πυλαι ἄδον ου κατισχυσουσιν αυτης. Και δωσω σοι τας κλεις της βασιλειας των ουρανων· και ὁ εαν δησης επι της γης, εσται δεδεμενον εν τοις ουρανοις· και ὁ εαν λυσης επι της γης, εσται λελυμενον εν τοις ουρανοις.*

In this brief but most pregnant address of our Lord to St. Peter, what is promised to him, what-

\* From the Douay version. Between it and the authorised Protestant version there is no substantial difference.

ever it be—is expressed under the form of at least two—I shall hereafter show, under the form of three—different metaphors. The first metaphor is that of

### I. THE ROCK.

6. After Peter's full and prompt profession of the divinity of our Lord, the latter pronounces him blessed, and then proceeds to say to him, Thou art Rock, and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. Here the first metaphor of the Rock is exhausted. Now several questions arise on these words: Is Peter the rock on which our Lord says he will build his Church? What is the full purport and meaning of Christ's promise, that the Church would be built on Peter as on a rock? and that the gates of Hell should not prevail against it? What are the relations of Peter to the Church necessarily implied in these words?

#### § 1. FIRST QUESTION: *Is Peter the rock on which Christ promised to build his Church?*

*Πέτρος* is translated by several Protestant writers *stone*, and not *rock*. Leigh, in his Crit. Sacr., quoted by Parkhurst, says that “it doth always signify a *stone*, never a *rock*”. Parkhurst himself

denies this, and refers to a passage in Longinus in support of his assertion. Bloomfield says that it signifies *rock* not unfrequently in the classical writers—he refers to Herodotus, Sophocles, and Callimachus. Whatever the classical meaning of the word may be, there can be no doubt that *πετρος* is used here to signify a *rock*: for *πετρα* signifies a *rock*, and *πετρος* is identified with *πετρα*.

First: *πετρα* signifies a *rock*, 1<sup>o</sup>. Because the Church is manifestly represented here as an edifice built on the *petra*. Now, it would be a gross and ludicrous impropriety to say of an edifice that it was built on a *stone*. The Church is everywhere in Scripture represented as of ample dimensions: vastness is one of its leading properties. If it be erected on a ground of stone, the stone must be a very large one, that is, it must be what we call a *rock*.

2<sup>o</sup>. The translation *rock* is in accordance with the usage of Scripture.

“Behold, I will stand there before thee, upon the rock (*πετρας*) Horeb; and thou shalt strike the rock (*πετραν*)”—*Exod.*, xvii. 6.

“Thou shalt stand upon the rock (*πετρας*). And when my glory shall pass, I will set thee in a hole of the rock (*πετρας*)—*ibid.*, xxxiii. 21, 22.

"And speak to the rock ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha s$ ) before them, and it shall yield waters"—*Numb.*, xxii. 8 and 10.

The same word is used in several parts of Scripture, in which allusion is made to this fact of the miraculous production of water for the Israelites in the desert: *Deuteron.*, viii. 15. *Psalm*, lxxvii. 15, 16, 20, civ. 41, cxiii. 8. *Isa.*, xlvi. 21. *I. Corinth.*, x. 4.

"But though thou build thy nest in a rock" ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha$ ), etc.—*Exod.*, xxiv. 21.

"That he might suck honey out of the rock" ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha s$ )—*Deuteron.*, xxxii. 13.

"They hid themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks" ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha s$ )—*I. Kings*, xiii. 6.

"Overthrowing the mountains, and breaking the rocks" ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha s$ ) in pieces—*III. Kings*, xix. 11.

"She abideth among the rocks" ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha s$ )—*Job*, xxxix. 28.

"Enter thou into the rocks" ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha s$ )—*Isaias*, xi. 10.

"Look into the rock" ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha v$ ) whence you are hewn”—*ibid.*, li. 1.

"Sacrificing children in the torrents under high rocks" ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\omega v$ )—*ibid.*, lvii. 5.

"And hide it there in a hole in the rock" ( $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha s$ )—*Jerem.*, xiii. 4.

I might double the number of texts from the Old

Testament. In the New Testament, also, we have several examples.

“A wise man that built his house upon a rock” (*πετραν*)—*Matt.*, vii. 24 and 25.

“And the rocks (*πετρας*) were rent—And laid it in his own monument, which he had hewed out of a rock” (*πετραν*)—*Ibid.*, xxvii. 51, 60.

“He is like to a man building a house, who digged deep and laid the foundation upon a rock” (*πετραν*)—*Luke*, vi. 48.

“And other some fell upon a rock” (*πετραν*)—*ibid.*, viii. 6 and 13.

“A stumbling stone and a rock (*πετραν*) of scandal”—*Rom.*, ix. 33, from *Isaias*. So *I. Peter*, 11, 8.

“Hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks (*πετρας*) of mountains”—*Apoc.*, vi. 15 and 16.

It is certain and evident, at least from these two arguments taken together, that *rock* is the only true rendering of the Greek word.

I now proceed to show that *πετρος* is identical with *πετρα*.

FIRST: Our Lord spoke not in Greek but Hebrew, or the dialect of Hebrew at that time prevalent in Judea. *Kepha* is the word which in that language signifies a *rock*, and was, no doubt,

the word used in the clause, “Upon this rock I will build my Church”. Now, we find that *Kephas* (the *s* is added in Greek) was the name given to Simon by Christ, and *Peter* (*Πέτρος*) is the translation of that name into Greek: that is, that *Peter* and *Kephas* are the same name, one Greek, the other Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic. “And Jesus looking upon him, said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter” (*σὺ κλεθησῃ Κηφας· δὲ ἐρμηνευεται Πέτρος*)—*John*, i. 42. See also *I. Corinth.*, ix. 5, xv. 5, etc. Christ, then, it is manifest, addressed Peter in this form of words, “Thou art rock (*Kepha*), and upon this rock (*Kepha*) I will build my Church”. Now, it is plain that the same word occurring thus twice so closely, and in such a construction, applies to the same person. An individual is designated by a certain name, which implies a certain property, and in the same breath, without any qualifying or explanatory words whatever, an assertion is made regarding something possessing the same property, and designated by the same name; it would never, except in controversy, enter into any one’s head to doubt that that *something* is the same person. Thus, if the Baptist in pointing to our Lord had said, “He is the lamb of God, this lamb will take

away the sins of the world", no one would dream that the word *lamb*, in the two members of the sentence, indicated two different persons or things. So, if I say "Peter is a hero, this hero is also a good man. Henry is a soldier, this soldier fought in many battles. Thomas is a scholar, this scholar will yet enlighten the world", etc., etc., no man would doubt that Peter was the hero in both clauses, Henry the soldier, Thomas the scholar. Of course I admit that the same name or title may be used in the same sentence, and in two members, one immediately following the other, to designate different persons or things. But when this is intended, there must be something in the sentence to indicate clearly that there is a transition from one person or thing to another; otherwise the reader will be necessarily deceived. Thus, I can say "Henry is a hero, but Richard is a hero whose courage has been tested": here, the insertion of the words, "but Richard", makes the transition manifest and unmistakeable. But there is nothing of the kind in our Lord's words to indicate any transition: on the contrary, everything in them indicates that there is no transition whatever.

In the Greek πέτρος is used in the first member as the proper *name* of Peter, rather than πετρα; the

former being in the masculine gender, and therefore, according to the usage of the Greek language, more appropriately applied to a man. Πέτρα is used in the second member as being the term more commonly in use as a common noun, and also the ordinary word for signifying *rock*: Πέτρος is far less commonly used as a common noun, and *rock*, though not an unfrequent meaning, is not the ordinary meaning of the word. The French translation is particularly happy in this respect; the same word *pierre* being the ordinary term for the name *Peter* and for signifying a *rock*.

9. SECONDLY: the connecting particle *and* (*καὶ*) shows the identity of subject in the two members. "Thou art Rock, *and* upon this rock", etc. If the second rock were different from the first, the particle *and* would not have been used, but some other particle indicating the change to a different subject, such as *but*, *however*, *nevertheless*, etc.

10. I admit that the word *καὶ* (*and*) is sometimes used to connect antithetical sentences or members of sentences. But, in the first place, it is *very* rarely used in this way. In the second place, I maintain that, in every single instance where it is thus used, the antithesis is clearly marked in the accompanying words: so that *and* itself in none of

these instances indicates change or antithesis, as *but* or *however* would indicate. Thus in the strongest, or one of the strongest texts quoted on the opposite side—"They went out from us; but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have remained with us: but that they may be manifest, that they are not all of us. But (*καὶ*) you have the unction from the Holy One", etc.—I. John, ii. 20. Is it not plain that in this passage we see the antithesis not from *καὶ*, but from the other words before and after, which express it as distinctly as it is possible for words to do? "*They\** went out from us—but *they* went not of us—for if *they* had been of us—*they* would, no doubt, have remained with us—but that *they* may be manifest—that *they* are not all of us—but *you* have the unction from the Holy One—I have not written to *you*", etc. It is not *καὶ* that indicates the antithesis of the text, but it is the manifest antithesis of the text that shows us the antithetical force of *καὶ*. This observation applies to all passages where *καὶ* has this force. But in the text of St. Matthew there is not a shadow of antithesis in any thing that

\* The personal pronoun in the Greek is implied in the form of the verb; *εξηλθον*—*οὐκ ησαν*, etc.

precedes or follows *καὶ*. Consequently, if this particle were intended to bear an antithetical meaning here, we would be necessarily led into error.

11. Common words, like *and* (*καὶ*), which occurs in almost every sentence a man speaks or writes, have a common ordinary meaning; they have also an uncommon out-of-the-way meaning in particular contexts, which is *always*, in written language, known from the context and from the context only. To force upon them this uncommon meaning in contexts which in no way require it: to infer that, because, in a peculiar context and on account of the peculiarity of the context, a word *must* have a certain meaning different from its ordinary meaning, therefore it *may* or *must* have this extraordinary meaning in other contexts that do not at all demand it: this is plainly to unsettle human speech altogether, to turn the interpretation of language into a mere scramble.

12. Again, this particle occurs within the short space of these two verses not less than five times, besides the clause immediately under discussion: *and I say—**and on this rock—**and the gates of Hell—**and I will give—**and whatsoever thou shalt bind—**and whatsoever thou shalt loose.* In the rest of the chapter it occurs upwards of twenty times. In

each of these instances it has admittedly the common signification. Is it not preposterous to pick out this one clause, and fix this unusual meaning on the particle in it: there being nothing whatever in the clause, or in any thing that precedes or follows, to indicate in the least degree the sudden and solitary change of meaning?

13. THIRDLY: It is not said, Thou art Rock, and upon rock, or *a* rock, or *the* rock, or *some* rock, I will build my Church: but the words are, Thou art Rock, and upon *this* rock ( $\tauαυτη\tauη\piετρα$ ), on this *the* rock, etc. According to the common usages of language, “*this* rock” must refer to the only rock of which there is any mention in the previous words. This is a universal law of speech—founded, like all laws of language, on usage—that the demonstrative pronoun should refer to the subject immediately preceding; unless there be something in the context clearly indicating a different relation. That there is any thing of the kind in the context before us, no man, as far as I know, has ever attempted to show. They adduce arguments altogether external to the context, theological arguments, conjectures; but from the context they make no effort to prove their point.

14. FOURTHLY: Let the reader mark the course

of our Lord's address, and see how it is from first to last directed to Peter, and to Peter exclusively, in the most pointed and emphatic manner. "And Jesus answering said to him, Blessed art thou *Simon Bar-Jona*; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to *thee*, but my Father who is in Heaven. And I say to *thee*, *Thou* art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to *thee* the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever *thou* shalt bind upon Earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever *thou* shalt loose on Earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven". Here we have Peter addressed expressly in almost every line: the Evangelist commences by saying that our Lord directed his discourse to *him*. Now I say that, if our Lord meant by the words "upon this rock", etc., introduced as they are in the middle of this so direct and marked address to Peter—if he meant not Peter, but some other person or persons, or thing or things, he was bound, in order to save us from the erroneous meaning into which his words as reported by the Evangelist would necessarily lead us, to intimate in some way, if not what was meant by "this rock", at least that Peter was not designated by it. Indeed I know not how any

one could deny that the obvious and natural sense of the text, just as it lies, indicates Peter as the rock; and that, if there were no special reasons over and above the natural drift and bearing of the words for interpreting them otherwise, they could not be otherwise interpreted.

15. FIFTHLY: An immense number of Protestant writers have indeed advanced and tried to defend the interpretation which denies Peter to be the rock; or have held the question to be doubtful, and one that cannot now be decided. It is evident, however, that they are driven to this desperate strait from reluctance to admit the consequences which they foresaw would follow from admitting that Peter was the rock. The more strenuously they deny this, the more evident does their conviction appear, that in conceding it they concede a primacy in Peter. Many learned Protestants, however, in more recent times, fairly give up this ground, and, with praiseworthy candour, admit that the opinion originated in the motives to which I have ascribed it. Dr. Marsh, late Bishop of Peterborough, thus writes:

“ But though it was so easy to confute the arguments of the Romish writers on this subject, both the Lutheran and the Calvinist divines, from the

very commencement of the reformation, had recourse to the uncritical expedient of torturing the words of our Saviour to a meaning which they cannot convey. These learned divines could not divest themselves of the notion, that St. Peter was not a sort of tutelary saint, because he was claimed by the Church of Rome; and therefore, in the same proportion as the Church of Rome endeavoured to *raise* the importance of St. Peter, in the same proportion did the followers both of Luther and Calvin endeavour to *lower* it. And as the words of the Latin Vulgate, *Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam*, were so interpreted by the Romish writers, as if that Church were the only church to which the words applied, the Lutheran and Calvinist divines saw no other expedient of confuting their adversaries, than by asserting that the latter part of the passage applied not to St. Peter at all".

A little further on he adds: "It seems a desperate undertaking to prove, that our Saviour alluded to any other person than to St. Peter; for the words of the passage can indicate no one else"—*Comparative View, Append., Note D.*

Bloomfield (in a note on this text) says, after alluding to the rejected interpretations: "Others,

again—and indeed almost every modern expositor of note—refer it to Peter himself; and with reason".

Stanley (in his *Sermons and Essays on the Apostolic Age*, p. 118) says: "That it was in consequence of the confession, and in reference to it, that the name was bestowed, thus agreeing with the probable origin of the only other surname bestowed in like manner on any of the other Apostles (*Luke*, ix. 54), there can be little doubt. But as the name Cephas has regard not merely to this particular act, but (*John*, i. 42), to the general character of which it was the expression, so it seems certain that the words themselves ( $\epsilon\pi\iota\tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\pi\epsilon\tau\rho\alpha$ ) though occasioned by the confession, refer to Peter himself".

So also the author of *The claims of the Church of Rome considered with a view to Unity* (p. 25), who quotes Rosenmuller and others as agreeing in the same opinion.

16. SIXTHLY: The other interpretations of the passage are utterly untenable. They are untenable for the several reasons given, which prove the one true interpretation: and they are untenable for direct and specific reasons, and from their own intrinsic rottenness. These opinions are, I. that the

rock is Christ himself: II. That it is the faith of Peter, that is, according to some, the objective faith, or the doctrine just confessed by Peter; according to others, his subjective faith, the actual assent which he had given, or the external declaration thereof, the external act of faith, or both together: III. that it is the whole body of the Apostles: IV. that it is the whole body of the faithful.

The first and second of these opinions are the more common. The third is less common. I suppose no sensible man would at the present day maintain the fourth opinion. I shall run through some of the direct arguments against each as rapidly as possible.

17. The *first* opinion, that Christ is the rock, is unsound: I. This opinion necessarily supposes that “*and* on this rock” means “*but* on this rock”; or that Christ indicated himself by some gesture, such as pointing to himself with his finger, when he was uttering the words “on *this* rock”; or rather it supposes both. For it is evident from what has been said, that if the particle has not an antithetical force, or if Christ did not indicate by some sign beyond the words as reported in Scripture, there was no possible means of knowing or sus-

pecting that the antithetical transition was intended, nor could any human being know or suspect it.

But I have already proved that the particle *καὶ* cannot have an antithetical meaning. And there is no shadow of a shade of authority, in the text or the context, or in any part of Scripture, for supposing that our Lord used any gesture whatever, still less a gesture which would turn his words so completely from their plain natural signification. Therefore the supposition of any such gesture cannot for a moment be entertained. Nay,

18. II. Such a supposition gives a direct and distinct sanction to that fatal system of modern rationalism, which confounds and destroys the sense of any part of Scripture. For if I have a right to suppose such gestures in order to make out a meaning different from that which the text itself supplies, a rationalist has just as good right to suppose not only gestures, but other equally unauthorised hypotheses as modifications of any other text of Scripture. And this is, as we all know, their actual and favourite mode of procedure.\* In this way they, with the greatest ease, rid the Sacred Volume of miracles and of whatever else does not suit their fancy.

\* See Rose's Protestantism in Germany; Strauss's Life of Jesus, etc.

19. The only argument that I have met with deserving any notice, in support of this opinion, is the following. Christ is the rock on which the Church is built: it is in him that the Church is sustained and made victorious over the gates of Hell. He is moreover expressly called a rock, more than once in Scripture, and a rock in his relation to the Church: *Isai.*, xxviii. 16. *I. Pet.*, ii. 6, 7, 8. *I. Corinth.*, x. 4.\* Therefore St. Peter

\* Not many months ago a work appeared under the following title—"The Rock of Rome; or, The Arch Heresy: by James Sheridan Knowles, Author of *Virginius*, *The Hunchback*". In page 279 the author says, "Listen to inspiration! *Who is a rock, save our God?* Listen to yourself. *Peter is a rock, as well as God.* Plead not the authority of Christ. God cannot contradict himself. God cannot utter falsehood. You misrepresent Christ, you dis honour him, deny him, when you quote him as the authority for your fundamental dogma—YOUR ARCH AND BLASPHEMOUS FABLE (*sic*)". The writer does not refer to the particular place of Scripture from which he took the text, "*Who is a rock save our God?*" The only text that I know like it is in *II. Kings*, xxii. 2. "And he said, The Lord is my rock, and my strength, and my saviour". But whether the text be really in Scripture or not, it presents no particular difficulty: the answer to the objection above applies fully to it.

The reader will doubtless have noticed the very select phraseology used in the preceding extract, by Mr. James Sheridan Knowles, author of "*Virginius*", and the "*Hunchback*". The sentence is however far from an adequate specimen of the temper and style of

is not the rock of the Church, and could not have been so designated by our Lord.

20. ANSWER. I. Christ is the Rock of the Church, and Peter is the Rock of the Church; but in different ways. Christ is the Rock by inherent power, Peter by power communicated from him:

the whole book. In truth, I do not recollect to have met, in the whole course of my reading, any book upon any subject so outrageously abusive, except another little volume by the same author, also recently published, against the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence. They are both literally nothing else than a string of scurrilities from beginning to end. The excess of rage and foul names is such as can hardly be accounted for on the supposition of a sane mind in the writer. In the volume before us, he is absolutely furious against St. Peter: the blessed apostle is an object of intense personal hatred; he is scolded and vilified throughout. For example, in page 111, St. Peter is thus described at a period long subsequent to our Lord's Ascension—"Among his friends, when opinion is to be conciliated, he wavers; he falls; he is a time server; he plays fast and loose. Devoid of moral courage, and utterly destitute of due respect for his own character, he suffers himself to be exhibited to the whole visible Church, of his own time, as an example of shameful vacillation and dishonesty; and to be handed down as such to remotest posterity". Truly this—and there is much worse in the book—might be taken as a fair character of Pontius Pilate, who condemned Christ: but, if we had not been expressly told, we could not imagine that any man calling himself a Christian would write in such a strain of him whom Christ made the Rock of his Church, and to whom he gave the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. Mr. Knowles had better have kept to his "Virginius" and "Hunchback".

Christ, as supreme king, Peter as king delegated: Christ as primary, Peter as secondary: Christ as chief agent, Peter as the living instrument: Christ as from whom, Peter as through whom: Christ makes Peter what he is, Peter is what he is made: Christ is God, Peter is man, though a man highly endowed by God. So God is Lord, and kings are lords: the Holy Ghost is teacher of the Church; bishops and priests are teachers of the Church. It is evident that the same titles may be given to the same things, may be affirmed in different senses of different persons. St. Thomas of Aquin was a great man, Napoleon was a great man, Shakspeare was a great man. The Apostles achieved mighty victories, Alexander the Great achieved mighty victories. The sun is bright, the moon is bright, the morning star is bright, a strong fire is bright. There is a brilliant style, there is a brilliant equipage, there is a brilliant discovery. There is a strong mind, there is a strong argument, there is a strong man.

Of course I do not use these examples as direct illustrations of the texts before us, and parallel with them, but as illustrations of the principle stated above, that we are not to look to the mere identity of words applied to different objects, without exa-

mining whether they have, what they so often have not, a perfect identity of meaning.

21. II. The Scripture itself supplies abundance of instances, wherein titles are applied to the Apostles which are also applied to Christ, and things predicated of them which are also predicated of him, in a sense quite different.

1<sup>o</sup>. Christ is the *light of the world*. "That was the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world"—*John*, i. 9. He says of himself, "I am the light of the world": "I am come a light into the world"—*ibid.*, viii. 12, xii. 46. Yet he calls the Apostles the light of the world; "you are the light of the world"—*Matth.*, v. 14.

2<sup>o</sup>. Christ is the one *foundation*. "For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid; which is Christ Jesus"—*I. Corinth.*, ii. 11. The Apostles are not only foundations but a foundation. "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the twelve names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb"—*Apocal.*, xxi. 14. "Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone"—*Ephes.*, ii. 20.

3<sup>o</sup>. Christ is the *Pastor* or *Shepherd*. "I am

the good shepherd”—*John*, x. 11, 14. Others are also pastors or shepherds. “And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors”.

4º Christ is the *Bishop*. “For you were as sheep going astray, but you are now converted to the shepherd and bishop of your souls”—*I. Pet.*, ii. 25. Others are also bishops. “Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops”—*Acts*, xx. 28. “It behoveth therefore a bishop to be blameless”—*I. Timoth.*, iii. 2. “For a bishop must be without crime”—*Tit.*, i. 7.

5º Christ is *sent with divine mission*. “The works themselves which I do give testimony of me that the Father hath sent me”—*John*, v. 36. “My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me”—*ibid.*, vii. 16. The Apostles are also sent with divine mission. “Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves”—*Matth.*, x. 16. “As the Father hath sent me, I also send you”—*John*, xx. 21.

Many other examples might be adduced of the same titles applied to our Lord and to his Apostles or others of his disciples. In each of the preceding classes of texts the very same words are used in the Greek to designate the titles thus applied.

In the first class  $\phi\omega\varsigma$  τοῦ κοσμοῦ is used: in the second, θεμελίως: in the third,  $\omega\mu\pi\eta\tau$ : in the fourth,  $\epsilon\omega\iota\sigma\kappa\omega\sigma\varsigma$ : in the fifth  $\omega\mu\pi\omega$  and  $\alpha\omega\sigma\tau\epsilon\lambda\lambda\omega$  indiscriminately.

St. Basil (or whoever is the author of the Homily on Penance in the Appendix to the Second Volume of the Benedictine edition of his works) puts this in a clear light. “Peter thrice denies, and he is placed in the foundation.....Peter saying, and with a blessing saying, *Thou art the Son of the Most High God*, and hearing *Thou art Rock*, was extolled. Yet though rock, he is not as Christ rock, but as Peter rock. For Christ is truly the unshaken rock; but Peter [is so] through [that] rock. For Jesus bestows his own dignities, not impoverished thereby, but having what he gives. He is the light: *You are the light of the world*. He is priest: he makes priests. He is the sheep: *Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves*. He is the rock: he makes the rock, and bestows his own upon his servants. For this is the mark of the rich, to have and to bestow”.\*

\* I subjoin the original; as it is hardly possible to translate it into readable English.

Πέτρος τρὶς απαρνεῖται, καὶ κείται εν θεμελίῳ... Πέτρος ειπὼν καὶ εὐλογηθεῖς, ειπὼν, ὅτι ‘Τιος ἐν του Θεου του ἴψιστου, καὶ ακούσας, ὅτι Πέτρος ἐν ενεγκαρπίᾳθη. Εἰ γαρ καὶ στέρος, συχώσ

From all this it is evident that Christ's being a rock, or being called a rock, or the rock, or exclusively the one rock, is no reason why another might not be called a rock in another sense, and is no reason why the rock in our text should be understood of Christ, especially in opposition to the plain drift of the passage and to the fundamental laws of interpreting language.

22. The *second* opinion is equally inadmissible, that by the rock is meant Peter's faith or confession of faith.

Because a *rock* is nowhere in Scripture used as a symbol or type of faith. Therefore faith could not be designated, as here it would be designated, *simply* and *unqualifiedly* by the name *rock*. Even if it had been made, as it might with great propriety have been made, a type of faith, still it could not be used as a simple name for faith. It

Χριστος πετρα, ὡς Πετρος πετρα· Χριστος γαρ οντως πετρα ασαλευτος· Πετρος δε δια την πετραν· Χαριζεται γαρ Ιησους τα έαυτον αξιωματα, ουκ αποκενουμενος, αλλ' εχων ἀ διδωσι· Φως εστιν. Τμεις εστε το φως του κοσμου. "Ιερευς εστι" ποιει ιερεας. Προβατον εστιν. Ιδου αποστελλω ὑμας ὡς προβατα εν μεσω λυκων· Πετρα εστι· πετραν ποιει, και τα ιδια χαριζεται τοις δουλοις. Τουτο γαρ σημειον πλουσιον, το εχειν και χαριζεσθαι.

S. Basil. Op. Tom. 2. (Vol. 4. p. 863, Edit. Paris, 1839).

should be moreover appropriated exclusively as a symbol of faith; and this appropriation should be familiarly known, not like the proper name of an individual denoting him exclusively. Thus a lamb is a type of an innocent and meek person. Though used as a title of our Lord, it would not be sufficient to designate him individually, unless something were added to show, or unless the circumstances showed, that he was meant. But the title "Lamb of God", though in itself applicable to many, like the title "Man of God" —*I. Timoth.*, vi. 11, has been appropriated exclusively to Christ, and therefore, without any other explanatory words or circumstances, is, when used, at once understood as designating him individually, like the names Jesus, or Christ, or Redeemer.

So a fox is the symbol of a cunning man. But if I affirmed something of *the fox*, meaning an individual whose proper name I do not mention, whom I in no way designate, who is not known under the *sobriquet* of "the fox", whom, in short, neither I nor the circumstances individualize in any way; then no one would understand whom I alluded to. When our Lord said, "Go, and tell that fox", etc. — *Luke*, xiii. 32, he was at once

understood to mean Herod, for Herod's name was thus introduced immediately before: "The same day there came some of the Pharisees saying to him, Depart and get thee hence, for Herod hath a mind to kill thee. And he said to them, Go, and tell that fox", etc. But if he had begun to speak of a fox, without any intimation from himself or the circumstances, he would not have been understood as meaning Herod in particular.

So, when he spoke of his body under the symbolical name of temple, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"—*John*, ii. 19, he was not understood by the Jews to speak of the temple of his body, but of the literal temple in which they then stood; because either he did not signify to them, or but obscurely signified to them, that he spoke of his body.\*

\* It appears to me very clear that our Lord gave no sign whatever that he meant his own body, except what was contained in his naked words; and this, as we see, was most ambiguous, and indeed such as, at the time, they could not understand except conjecturally, if even conjecturally. For the Evangelist immediately adds, in his own words, "But he spoke of the temple of his body": which seems to imply that our Lord himself did not explain in any way, otherwise the Evangelist would have recorded *that* explanation, and not substituted *his own*. He adds moreover, "When therefore he was risen again from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said

23. I might add a thousand more illustrations of this. We have faith typified under the symbols of a *shield*, a *breast-plate* (*Ephes.*, vi. 16. *I. Thess.*, v. 8), etc. But the words are “the shield of *faith*, the breast-plate of *faith*”. If St. Paul had written, “Stand therefore...in all things taking the shield, wherewith you may be able”, etc., every one would understand him to mean a spiritual shield—the circumstances clearly determining thus much. But that he meant the shield of *faith*, or of *charity*, or of all *virtues*, we could not know—except perhaps by conjecture: and in this case we would be left to mere conjecture, as far as the text itself would go, but, as has been already shown, we are not left to conjecture in explaining the text in St. Matthew.

24. As St. Paul says, “the shield of *faith*”; even if our Lord had said, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock of *faith* I will build my church”,

this, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had said”: words which indicate that it was the event which explained to them the meaning of our Lord’s language. The supposition of CORNELIUS A LAPIDE appears to me, therefore, utterly improbable and groundless—that our Lord pointed to himself with his hand. While the opinion of MALDONATUS is well borne out by the context—that our Lord designedly spoke so obscurely that even the disciples could not understand his meaning, until the event had unfolded it.

still the rock would not be Peter's faith, but Peter himself, as having and professing the faith. Peter would be the rock of faith; as we say of a strong man that "he is a rock of strength". It is not strength in the abstract we mean, but the strong man. It would not be Peter's faith in the abstract, but Peter the man of faith.

25. It is in this sense that the fathers are to be understood when they speak of the rock as Peter's faith, and of the Church as having been established on Peter's faith. I shall reserve the full examination of this point—which Barrow,\* Palmer,† and other High Church Protestant divines make so much of—until we come to the argument from Tradition: for to enter fully into it here would interrupt the continuity of the present part of the argument beyond all reasonable bounds; besides that the Traditional witness of the Church is the more appropriate head under which to introduce it. A few brief remarks will suffice here.

1<sup>o</sup>. The host of the Fathers in regular series teach explicitly that the rock was *Peter*, and that the Church was founded on *him*. I shall briefly

\* Enchirid. Theolog. Antiroman, vol. 2, p. 86, n. 2 (Oxford, 1836).

† Treatise on the Church, vol. 2, p. 374 (third edit.).

refer to some of them as they lie in the second volume of Dr. Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics*.\*

Tertullian teaches this twice; Origen, four times; St. Cyprian, nine times; St. James of Nisibis, once; St. Hilary, once; St. Ephrem Syrus, once; St. Gregory of Nyssa, once; St. Gregory of Nazianzum, three times; St. Basil, twice; St. Pacian, once; St. Epiphanius, twice; St. Ambrose, four times; St. Jerom, three times; St. Chrysostom, twice; St. Augustine, twice; St. Maximus, twice; St. Cyril of Alexandria, once; St. Leo, five times; etc., etc. (*Faith of Catholics*, vol. 2, p. 4, etc.).

26. 2<sup>o</sup>. Some of the Fathers are not interpreting the particular text, but adapting its words —a very common practice down to our own day.

\* I wish Dr. Waterworth had taken a different set of *Propositions* from those adopted by Berington and Kirk. Indeed I wish that he had thrown that not very reputable book of theirs over board altogether. He is infinitely better qualified for the task he undertook, than they were: nor do I see that he is indebted to them in any thing worth acknowledging: his work is not their work improved; it is a much more original work than theirs. I have also often wished that he had given (at least on the more leading doctrines) all the extracts from the Fathers in full, with as much of the context preceding and following as would throw light on the drift and connexion of each passage; together with the *whole* of the *original text* on the opposite page. But I suppose this would have been greatly too expensive.

27. 3<sup>o</sup>. The Fathers, when they speak of the rock as Peter's faith, of the Church as founded on his faith, not only do not exclude Peter, but more or less expressly include him; they speak of the faith as *in him*, of him *as holding and professing this faith*—to the exclusion of him as considered in other respects, *e. g.* as Simon the son of Jonas, as a mere man like others, as mere flesh and blood. Thus St. Ambrose (*De Incarnat.*, c. 5, n. 34), “Faith is therefore the foundation of the Church: for not of the *flesh* of Peter, but of *his faith*, was it said, that the gates of Hell shall not prevail over him”. St. Peter Chrysologus (*serm. 104*), “Peter got his name from rock (*petra*), because he first merited to found the Church in the firmness of faith”. St. Maximus (*Hom. 4, on St. Peter*), “He [Peter] is called rock (*petra*) because he first laid the foundations of faith in the nations”. And so forth.\*

28. 4<sup>o</sup>. All this is made as clear as any thing can well be made, by just considering for a moment

\* See BALLERINI, *De vi ac Ratione Primatus, etc.*, c. 12 (*Monaster. Westphalor.* 1845): from which the above extracts are translated at second hand for the present. When we come to discuss the matter *ex professo*, the original text will be given in full.

one of the most common forms of speech in all languages. Thus we say of a brave general, that his courage conquered the enemy: of a generous man, that his generosity disarmed his opponents: of a cunning man, that his cunning outwitted his rivals: of an able statesman, that his wisdom saved the state from disasters: of a virtuous man, that his piety will be rewarded in Heaven: of a soldier, that his sobriety and valour obtained for him such or such promotion in the army: of a clever scholar, that his learning and abilities won such or such distinctions: etc., etc.

In all these, and all other such forms of speech, we do not mean that the courage, etc., in the abstract, as excluding the man, as purely objective, as something outside of him, did so and so. We mean the *man as courageous*, the *man by his courage*; the *man as generous*, the *man by his generosity*; etc., etc. So when St. John (*I. Epist.*, v. 4) says, “This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith”, he means faith *as in us*; he means *we by faith* overcome: *our* faith. So when the Fathers say, Peter’s faith is the rock, on Peter’s faith the Church is founded, Peter’s faith conquers the gates of Hell, etc., they in reality use one of the commonest and plainest of all figures of speech, to

signify that Peter, not by his natural courage, not by his natural skill, not even by his other supernatural gifts — though they contribute — but by his faith preëminently, is the rock, etc.

29. From what I have said above (*n.* 22) of the violation of the laws of language which this second opinion involves, let it not be inferred that I mean that the faith of Peter, in the abstract, that is, the doctrine confessed by him, could not be called a rock, or that the *rock* in the text before us might not bear this signification, if the selection and arrangement of the words of the text were different. But I say that, as the text actually lies, such a meaning would be forced, unnatural, and repugnant to the usages of language.

30. The *third* opinion is also inadmissible, that by the rock is meant the body of the Apostles.

Because, as I have already shown, the whole address of Christ, beginning, “Blessed art thou”, etc., is in the most explicit and emphatic manner directed exclusively to Peter. There is not one word, directly or indirectly, addressed to any other Apostle, or to the body of them. This opinion is utterly gratuitous.

31. There are two arguments advanced in favour of this opinion. The first is, that whatever is here

promised, and was, therefore, afterwards given to Peter, was also given to the rest of the Apostles.

Even though this assertion were true, it by no means follows that, *on the present occasion*, what was promised to Peter was also, on the present occasion, promised to the rest; especially as the words of the text explicitly contradict this. But the assertion is utterly false. As the argument, however, comes equally against any or all of our proofs from the three texts—or rather against the doctrine we collect from the texts, I shall consider it fully hereafter among the general objections; where it will be clearly proved from Scripture that what was here promised to Peter, was not promised or conferred on any of the other Apostles, or on all of them together.

32. The second argument is this. Peter, in his confession of faith, spoke as the mouthpiece or representative of the Apostles: what he confessed, they confessed. Therefore Peter was rewarded as the representative of the Apostles: what he received they received.

33. ANSWER. I deny both these assertions. I. There is not one word, from the beginning to the end of the narrative of this event, which in any way indicates that Peter spoke as in any way the representative of the other Apostles. Christ asks

*them* whom do *men* say he is? *They* answer this question: it was a question of fact which they knew, and which those who did not believe in his divine mission at all might have known. He then asks *them* whom *they* say (of course from conviction of faith) he is? They are all absolutely silent, except Peter: they utter not one word from that to the end: they give Peter no commission, no delegation, no intimation whatever to speak for them, to speak at all. Peter is alone in the rest of the passage: there is no more of *they* or *them*; it is all *him, thou, thee*. The hypothesis that Peter spoke in their name is just as unfounded as the hypothesis already noticed, that Christ in uttering the words “this rock” pointed with his finger to himself.

34. II. I deny the second assertion. It does not follow that because a man acts as the representative, even the unanimously and expressly commissioned representative of a body, *e. g.* in a deputation to the Sovereign; and in his capacity of representative, receives a mark of favour in the shape of title or power or both together; therefore the whole body receive this mark of favour, are elevated to the same rank or authority. The very contrary is what takes place. The body represented is undoubtedly honoured by the honours bestowed on

their representative; but they are not invested with his honour. A man's family and relatives are honoured by his elevation to the peerage; but his sons and daughters and cousins, to the fourth degree, do not, therefore, all become peers and peeresses. The Lord Mayor of Dublin represented the Corporation, and, indeed, the citizens, at the royal visit in 1849. He was created a baronet: but all the members of the Corporation, or all the citizens, did not thereby become baronets. Therefore, even if Peter had been expressly commissioned to speak in the name of the Apostles, it would not follow that the dignity or power conferred on him was also conferred on them. Then the words of the text are *so* strong against this.

35. The *fourth* opinion—that by the *rock* is meant the whole body of the faithful—is so absurd, that I shall only observe, regarding it, that if the *rock* meant the whole body of the faithful, *i. e.* the whole Church, then the whole Church would be built on itself: for I shall immediately prove that by the word Church in the clause, “on this rock I will build my Church”, is meant the whole Church.

Our FIRST point is now firmly established, that PETER IS THE Rock. We proceed to the

§ 2. SECOND QUESTION: *What is the Church which it is here promised was to be built on Peter?*

36. I take it as evident and admitted on all sides, that the word *Church*,—which, in its generic sense, when taken for an assembly of men, signifies any assembly or collection, sacred or secular—is here understood of a collection of the faithful, of *a Church* or *the Church*. The only question that can be raised is, whether it is to be taken for the whole body of the faithful, the universal Church of Christ; or for some particular church defined or undefined. Some Protestant divines have adopted the latter opinion: but I do not remember to have met it in the work of any Divine of the Established Church.

37. I assert that by the word *Church* is here signified the whole Church.

I. Whenever the word *Church*, in the sense of the collective faithful, occurs in the New Testament, without any word in the context, or the circumstances themselves of the context, to restrict its meaning, it signifies the universal Church. Where it is used in a restricted sense for a particular church or collection of particular churches, we know this

from some word or words in the context, or the circumstances indicated therein. For example:

1<sup>o</sup>. "But if any man seem contentious, we have no such custom, nor the Church of God"—*I. Cor.*, xi. 16.

"And God indeed hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, etc."—*ibid.*, xii. 28.

"And hath made him head over his Church—To him be glory in the Church"—*Ephes.*, i. 2, iii. 21.

"Christ is the head of the Church—as the Church is subject to Christ—as Christ also loved the Church", etc—*ibid.*, v. 23, etc.

Here the universal Church is signified: other examples might be added:

2<sup>o</sup>. "The Church which was at Jerusalem—The Church had peace throughout all Judea and Gallilee and Samaria—The Church which was at Antioch—The Church that is at Cenchre—The Church of God that is at Corinth—The Church of the Laodiceans—The Church of the Thessalonians" *Acts*, viii. 1, ix. 31, xi. 22, xiii. 1. *Rom.*, xvi. 1. *I. Corinth.*, i. 2. *II. Corinth.*, i. 1. *Coloss.*, iv. 16. *I. Thessalon.*, i. 1.

Here we have the word *church* restricted by the words immediately joined with it, to the signification of a particular church.

3º. “But Saul made havoc of the Church—And when they were come and had assembled the Church—He assembled the ancients of the Church—Wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the Church of God—He that prophesieth edifieth the Church—That the Church may receive edification”. *Acts*, viii. 3, xiv. 26, xx. 17, 28. *I. Corinth.*, xiv. 4, 5, 12.

Here the word *church* is restricted by the circumstances in which it is used; as will be evident to any one looking into the context of the passages referred to. In *Matthew*, xviii. 17, the word is restricted not only to signify a particular church, but moreover to signify only the rulers of a particular church; as appears from the purport of what is said, and from the next verse.

38. II. Christ not only says, I will build the Church, but “I will build *my* Church”. Now *his* Church, *Christ's* Church, thus simply and unqualifiedly uttered, is not this or that particular church, or any number of particular churches, but the whole Church.

39. III. If, in the clause, “the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it”, the word *it* refers (as almost all of all sides hold) to the word *church*, and not to *rock*, the whole Church must have been

meant: for indefectibility, which at least these words imply, is not promised to any particular church, but only to the Church universal, and, as we hold, to the See of Peter.

40. On the meaning of the words “I will build”, there is no room for dispute. It need only be remarked, that the corresponding Greek word is used in the New Testament to denote the erection of a house, tower, city, sepulchral monument, etc. *Matth.*, vii. 24, xxi. 33. *Luke*, iv. 29, xi. 47. Of course in the text before us the word is used of building in a spiritual sense.

§ 3. THIRD QUESTION: *What is the meaning of the promise that the Church would be built on Peter the Rock?*

41. We are now inquiring only into the verbal meaning of the clause—its first meaning. What that meaning itself means we shall inquire hereafter.

The Church is built by Christ on the rock Peter: this has been established. Now a man may be called a rock in a good or bad sense. In the latter sense it implies a stubborn, unbending disposition, or—and here I think its use is not common, if at all proper, the word *flint*, or *stone*, or the like,

being more proper—hard-heartedness, a disposition impervious to pity or other natural feelings, and the like. It is evident that in the text before us it is used in a good sense: and in this sense it implies two things. **FIRST:** *when affirmed of a man viewed by himself*, without reference to his connection with other things, it implies strength, vigour, firmness, stability. If we say of a man that he is a rock, we mean, and all will understand us to mean, this, and this only, that he is a vigorous, steady man, a man not easily put down, a man whom one might as well not encounter with soft weapons. We generally use the word in reference to some particular quality or qualities of the individual so characterized; which qualities are understood from the circumstances in which we speak, or are specified expressly by us. Thus, if we say of an eminent statesman, whom we know only or principally for his eminent statesmanship, that he is a rock, we mean that he is a rock in this respect; that he is a man of eminent, enduring, unconquerable powers as a statesman. So of a great general.

Again, we say that a man is a rock of *sense*; that is, he possesses an unfailing fund of strong sense: or that he is a rock of *learning*; that is, he

has a store of massive learning: or a rock of *wisdom*, or of *prudence*; and so forth.

42. On one hand, if a man were to display eminent statesmanship, or eminent courage, or eminent wisdom, on some or several trying occasions, but on other occasions he commits grave political blunders, or gives clear proofs of cowardice or of folly, we would not call him a rock of statesmanship, or of courage, or of wisdom. Thus the younger Pitt would be called a rock of statesmanship, or the very opposite, according to the parties speaking of him; one of whom view his life as marked throughout with the clearest evidences of the deepest political wisdom, though sometimes attended with unforeseen failures; the other of whom view it differently.

On the other hand, we would not say of the most accomplished rhymer, or musician, or singer, or buffoon, or cook, that he was a rock of rhyme, or music, or song, etc. Because there is nothing of power implied in any of these. Some of them are elegant accomplishments, some of them low; and they are but accomplishments.

In order, then, that a man should be called a rock on account of any qualities which he possesses,

three things are required. First, the quality must be one indicating strength, vigour; secondly, it must be a permanent quality in him: thirdly, he must possess it in an eminent degree. If a man is wise like other wise men, and habitually so, he could not be called a rock of wisdom: for this he must be eminently wise above his associates and, in other respects, his peers.

.43. SECONDLY: When a man is called a rock, not only from a certain quality of his, considered in itself, *but from his relation to something else which he as a rock sustains*, the title not only implies strength *in him*, but strength *communicated by him*. The name signifies not only that he is *strong*, but *strengthening*. He is not only a *rock*, but a *rock support*. Two things are thus essentially, directly, as a matter of course, conveyed to the mind of every one who hears the metaphor: first, that the superstructure is firm and secure; secondly, that it is secure in consequence of being built on a foundation so secure. No metaphor can be more obvious and unmistakeable as to its meaning than this: no form of language, however literal, full, and precise, can be clearer. Thus if I say, John's house—it is the same of a tower, a castle, a temple, a town, or any other structure—is built on solid ground:

John's house is built on a firm bottom : John's house is built on a rock : or in whatever other similar form I express myself; I am at once understood, every one understands me, to mean that John's house is secure from falling, and secure *because* it is built on a foundation\* so solid.

On the other hand, if I say, John's house is built on weak, soft ground ; on sand, turf, loose yielding earth, or the like ; I am at once understood to signify that the house is not secure—I would rather not live in it in time of flood or storm—it will tumble about John's ears some fine day.

\* I cannot well avoid using this word *foundation*. It does not at all convey the full force, nor any thing like the full force, of the *rock*. First, because the word *foundation*, in our language, signifies, at least in its ordinary popular sense, only the lower stratum of the walls of the building, or the thicker bottom wall, on which the walls of the building rest : whereas the *rock*, in our text, signifies the whole ground or site on which the building is erected. Secondly, because our word *foundation* does not convey the idea of a *strong* foundation : it may be strong or weak : whereas by the *rock* is signified not only a strong, but the very strongest foundation ; the *rocky ground* on which the whole building rests.

There are other points of difference, but I shall have more to say on these hereafter, in answering one of the leading objections of Protestant divines. Meantime let the reader carefully bear in mind the sense in which I use the word *foundation*, when I do use it as a translation for the *rock* ; when I say, "Peter is the foundation of the Church", etc.

44. THIRDLY: There is another idea conveyed as obviously and as surely by this metaphor; and which we must not omit to notice here. When I say that a house is built on a most solid and secure foundation, I mean not only that *consequently* it will not fall down into a ruin, and cease to be a house at all; but moreover that *consequently* its walls will not even crack, divide, lose their coherence and unity. We sometimes see a house, or a tower, or a solitary wall, with a rent in it extending from top to bottom, though it is still standing and likely to stand. When I say that a house is built on a solid foundation, I signify that the foundation will not only keep it standing up, but keep it from rent, fissure, or inclination to one side. So if I say that the foundation is not secure, I signify that the house is not only not secure against fall, but, what is included in this, not secure from other injuries: it is liable to give way altogether, and, of course, liable to give way a little.

Undoubtedly a house may be badly built on the firmest foundation, and may fall in a day after it has been built, though built on a rock. But I am now speaking of the import of words—what men mean to signify and do signify when they use such or such language. And I assert that when men say

that That house is built on a most secure foundation, they signify all that I have already said. It is true the foundation may not be firm, as they say it is; that, though it be firm, the house may be badly built, and likely to tumble in the first gale. But they mean to say and do say that it is firm, and that it will neither fall nor split asunder—and all this, because it is built on the firm foundation. What they mean may or may not be true. **WHAT JESUS, THE GOD OF TRUTH, SAYS, MUST BE TRUE.** If an impostor prophet says—‘Let them slay me, and I will rise again on the third day’; the true-meaning of his words is that he will rise on the third day after his death: but though he truly says this, it is a lie. When our Lord foretold his resurrection, the meaning of his words was, that he would really rise on the third day: but it was not more truly the meaning of his words than the same is the meaning of the false prophet’s words. What he said, however, was true: what the false prophet says is false.

45. **FOURTHLY:** There is another way in which men commonly convey their opinion of the strength and durability of a building, by characterizing the workman or workmen by whom it was erected. Thus, if I say John’s house was built by very bad

masons—by men who had never regularly learned their trade—by men who had not handled plummet or trowel for twenty years previous; I am at once understood to mean that the house is not securely built. On the contrary, if I say, the best masons in the kingdom were employed by John in the building of his house; and still more, if I add, that the ablest architect in the empire drew the plan, and superintended the building of it; I am at once understood to mean that the house is solidly and securely built: there is no fear that John's house will tumble or crack.

46. FIFTHLY and lastly: If I moreover represent that this the very strongest foundation has been selected and pronounced deliberately and decidedly to be the very strongest, by one who is the most competent to make such a selection and to pronounce such a judgment; nothing is wanting to the perfect fulness and force with which I convey my idea of the enduring solidity of the superstructure. I represent the foundation as of the strongest kind: I represent it as selected for the strongest and pronounced to be such by the very highest authority; I represent the building as constructed from first to last by the best hands. Human language is

not capable of conveying more strongly my conception of the firmness of that building.

47. These observations appear to me evidently just. They are not evolved by subtle argumentation; they rest on no doubtful principles. They lie clearly on the surface: they are founded on the ordinary and universal usages of human language. We have a remarkable example in the Scripture of the import of this saying, that a house is built on a strong or weak foundation, as implying the stability or weakness of the house. It occurs towards the end of *Matth.*, vii.

"Every one therefore that heareth these my words, and doth them, shall be likened to a wise man that built his house upon a rock: And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded on a rock. And every one that heareth these my words and doth them not, shall be like a foolish man that built his house upon the sand: And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof".

Here we have the idea of the firmness of the superstructure so clearly implied in that of the

foundation, that clearer it cannot be made by further explanation.

48. Let us apply what has been said to the words of our text, "Upon this rock I will build my Church". The rock certainly is one of the most expressive types of enduring unconquerable strength. To represent a house as built upon a rock is one of the most expressive ways of conveying one's idea of the firmness, the security, the durability, the abiding unity of the house. To represent the foundation as chosen by the ablest judge, the house as built by the most experienced architect and the most skilful workmen, is another not less expressive way of conveying the same. Yet all this is exactly and to the letter the way in which Christ represents the edifice of the Church and the foundation, Peter, on which it is built. That foundation is Peter, Peter the man of faith, Peter the rock of faith: for Christ called him the rock, Christ made him the rock, and he is the rock—"Thou *art* Rock". Immediately, in the same breath, the whole Church of God is promised to be built on him, on him *as the rock*—"On this rock". And the Church is built on Peter the Rock, not by the hand of man, however holy, not by angels or archangels, but by the Almighty God himself;

built all by him; he alone the designer, the architect, the workman, the author and finisher of the whole—"I will build my Church".

49. Peter, then, is the unfailing, indestructible foundation. The whole Church is built on this foundation, is unfailing and indestructible and essentially indivisible. And the Church is all this BECAUSE it is built on this Rock Peter, and BECAUSE God is the Architect and Builder of it. From Peter, then, the Church derives its stability and unity: on him, from him, through him, it is undivided and invincible: without him it is neither. From Christ all comes, but through Peter. Christ made the rock, and built the Church—but it was on the rock he built it: "on *this* rock". All that the Church has, it has from Christ, and from none other: but it has in the way, through the means established by Christ, and in no other way, through no other means. Christ is the rock, not made essential, but from himself essential, by necessity essential: Peter is the rock, not essential, but made essential. The Church could have done without him, had God so decreed; but the Church cannot do without him, for God has so decreed, has made him necessary to it. It is a great mystery, but it is God's word; and in his word there are mysteries

as great or greater. Human things are dim and incomplete beside Heavenly things; but we may compare them. The sovereign is ruler of a distant province; a viceroy is ruler too; the sovereign rules through the viceroy.

But I cannot as yet develope all that is essentially implied in the words already examined of my text. So I stop here for the present. We shall see the rest a little farther on.

§ 4. FOURTH QUESTION: *What is the meaning and connection of the next part of the promise, viz., that the gates of Hell should not prevail against the Church?*

50. "The gates of Hell". There are great divisions among commentators—not only Catholic against Protestant, but among Protestant commentators themselves—as to the meaning of the word "Hell" (*Hades*) in this place. There are at least two leading doctrines of the Catholic Church proved from the text before us—the Primacy of the Sovereign Pontiff and the Infallibility of the Church. The latter topic furnishes a more suitable occasion for discussing the meaning of the word. As we shall see, whichever of the different significations affixed by different writers to the word Hades in

this place, be adopted—whether death, or the grave, or Hell in the present sense of that word, or the receptacle of departed spirits in general—it comes substantially to the same, so far as the proper subject of the present essay is concerned. I shall therefore go through this part of the question briefly.

51. FIRST: That the word *gates* is to be understood in a figurative sense, is manifest enough. For the phrase “*gates of Hell*”, whatever it may signify more particularly, at least in its general signification here denotes a power antagonist to the Church, at war with it: but between gates, literally understood, and the Church there is not and cannot be any antagonism. The word is here evidently used as a symbol of strength and power—the *might of hades*, the *force of hades*, the *host of hades*, or the like, are what *the gates of hades* denote.

Gates were infinitely more important elements of strength in a city in ancient times than in ours, since the invention of gunpowder and the changes that from that period have taken place in the whole system of warfare. Hence we see the possession or the destruction and desolation of gates frequently signifying in Scripture the possession or the desolation and destruction of the city itself to which they were attached. Thus: “Thy seed

shall possess the gates of their enemies"—*Gen.*, xxii. 17. "Mayest thou increase to thousands of thousands, and may thy seed possess the gates of their enemies"—*ibid.*, xxiv. 60. "The Lord chose new wars, and he himself overthrew the gates of the enemies"—*Judges*, v. 8. It is remarkable that in each of these texts the word שָׁמַר (shahar) "gate" is rendered in the Septuagint version πόλις "city"—thus indicating in the clearest manner the identity in meaning of the two words. "I will humble the great ones of the Earth. I will break in pieces the gates [here θυρας] of brass, and will burst bars of iron"—*Isai.*, xlvi. 2. "Judea hath mourned, and the gates (πόλεων) thereof are fallen, and are become obscure on the ground"—*Jerem.*, xiv. 2. "The ways of Sion mourn, because there are none that come to the solemn feast: all her gates (πόλεων) are broken down"—*Lamentations*, i. 4. "Because her wound is desperate, because it is come even to Juda, it hath touched the gate (πόλεων) of my people even to Jerusalem—For evil is come down from the Lord into the gates (πόλεων) of Jerusalem"—*Micheas*, i. 9, 12. "The gates (πόλεων) of thy land shall be set wide open to thy enemies"—*Nahum*, iii. 13.\*

\* The phrase "gates of death" or "gates of hades" occurs in

52. **SECONDLY:** I shall not enter into the discussion on the literal meaning of ἀδων: for, as has been said already, and will be clearly proved by and by, the drift of the text, in reference to the subject of this Essay, is in no way affected by it. It is evident and, I suppose, admitted by all on every side, that the “Gates of Hades” are here used as a symbol of some power opposed to the Church, tending to “prevail against it”, to destroy it—the words *prevail against* clearly showing this. I shall therefore only say briefly, that, if *hades* means, as we say, *Hell*, the symbol is most forcible and appropriate. If it means *death* (as Bloomfield tenaciously maintains), or the *grave*, or the *receptacle of departed souls* (the word, in either of these

*Job*, xxxviii. 17, “Have the gates of death (*πυλαις θανατον*) been opened to thee; and hast thou seen the darksome doors (*πυλωροι δε ἀδωνιδοντες σε επωτηξαν*)?” *Psalms*, ix. 15: “Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death (*εκ των πυλων του θανατον*)”. *Psalms*, cxi. 18: “And they drew nigh even to the gates of death (*πυλων του θανατον*)”. *Isai.*, xxxviii. 10: “In the midst of my days I shall go to the gates of Hell (*πυλαις ἀδων*)”. It is evident that in these texts the “gates of hades” are not represented as a conflicting power, warring against another great power, as they are represented in Matthew; but that they merely mean death, or the entrance to death or the grave, simply as an object of fear and horror.

two latter senses, being used, by a very common metonymy, to signify death); the symbol is still sufficiently forcible and appropriate. For death personified presents the idea of a most mighty and terrific power, in the minds of all men at all periods of the world's history. Milton has so painted it in his *Paradise Lost*. Thus also in Scripture: "Put me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm: for love is strong as death ( $\theta\alpha\pi\alpha\tau\sigma$ ), jealousy is hard as Hell ( $\alpha\delta\eta\varsigma$ )"—*Canticles*, viii. 6. Compare the following text from *Isaias*: "We have made a covenant with Hell ( $\alpha\delta\sigma$ ), we have entered into a league with death ( $\theta\alpha\pi\alpha\tau\sigma$ )"—xxviii. 15.

53. THIRDLY: The power symbolized by the "Gates of Hell" must be a most strong and appalling power. This follows from what I have just said—whether *hades* mean Hell, or death, or both. It follows also clearly from the context. Christ plainly means by this clause, "and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it", to indicate the strength of the Rock or of the Church (it matters not which, as we shall see) over its enemy: he means to show the greatness of its strength. Now it would be the most absurd way possible of presenting an idea of the eminent strength of an individual, to say of him that he is able to overcome

ordinary obstacles, to conquer ordinary opponents. If I said, John is a man of extraordinary muscular power; he could knock down a sheep with a single blow, or break a walking cane across his knees; every one would suppose that I spoke ironically in lauding John's strength, and that I wanted to turn his real feebleness into ridicule. It is very plain, then, that the "Gates of Hades" denote some tremendous power battling against the Church.

54. **FOURTHLY:** The "Gates of Hades" denote not only a mighty power arrayed against the Church, a terrible enemy; they denote *the* great enemy, the greatest enemy, whom to prevail against is to be secure. I have no objection that *death*, in the literal meaning of the word, should be at least *connote*d or implied, in the sense that the Church should never die out, as a company of friends dies out, by the natural demise of her members, their places not being supplied. But I say that this is not only not enough for the fulness of our Lord's meaning, but it is not what is either principally or directly intended. I say that *the* enemy of the Church must be that mainly indicated. For it would be a very poor thing to say that the Church is so very powerful, that she would over-

come one enemy, and perhaps be conquered by another; that she would overcome the lesser, and be conquered by the greater. Christ manifestly represents the Church as simply a conquering power. The line of reasoning already pursued, from the plain meaning and drift of the metaphor employed by our Lord, shows this. He says the Church is built on a rock, and most firmly built there by his own hand, and that so firmly is it built, that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. Suppose that I commended the stability of a house in this way: it is built on the most solid foundation, it was built by the very best workmen, hail or rain or flood will not be able to move it—but (I add or imply) it will not be secure against a high wind. If I expressed myself in this way, or so as to convey this meaning at least by implication, would not every one understand me as upon the whole entertaining a rather low opinion of the stability of that house; and as doing away with the lofty encomiums pronounced in the opening of the sentence, by the awkward drawback expressed or insinuated at the close? Now, this is exactly what our Lord would have done, if, in the clause under examination, he did not mean to convey that the

Church would be victorious over her great and special enemies.

55. **FIFTHLY:** What is this great enemy or band of enemies at war with God's Church? The Scripture tells us clearly, repeatedly, in a variety of forms. It is the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, working through their several organs and instruments. The Church—not an abstraction or generic idea, but the actual, living Church; the followers of Jesus, priesthood and people, members of the one mystic body—this Church is everywhere in Scripture represented as engaged in a never-ending, deadly struggle against those potent and unwearied enemies. “I have fought a good fight”—*II. Tim.*, iv. 7. “Put you on the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the Devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood;\* but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places.

\* As we shall see immediately, our war is also against the flesh, *i. e.* the passions of the flesh. But in the present text, “flesh and blood” signify men; *i. e.* our war is not like wars among men, fought with material weapons against visible opponents, but a spiritual warfare, against invisible enemies, with spiritual arms. See ESTIUS, *in loc.*

Therefore take unto you the armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of justice, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: in all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God"—*Ephes.*, vi. 11, etc.

The whole imagery here is drawn from war and the implements and habiliments of war; and the enemies engaged against us are they that try to drag us into sin and perdition. Let us see this a little more in detail.

1<sup>o</sup>. Our warfare is against the *Devil*. "And the field is the world. And the good seed are the children of the kingdom. And the cockle are the children of the wicked one. And the enemy that sowed them is the Devil—Behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat—That through death he might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the Devil—That we be not overreached by Satan—But Satan hath hindered us—Your adversary the

Devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour—And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world”—*Matth.*, xiii. 39. *Luke*, xxii. 31. *Hebrews*, ii. 14. II. *Corinth.*, ii. 11. I. *Thessal.*, ii. 18. I. *Peter*, v. 8. *Apocal.*, xii. 9.

2º Our warfare is against the *World*. “Wo to the world because of scandals—If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you—Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life—Wonder not, brethren, if the world hate you—Whatever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith”—*Matth.*, xviii. 7. *John*, xv. 18. I. *John*, ii. 15, iii. 13, v. 4.

3º Our warfare is against the *Flesh*. “The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: for these are contrary one to another...Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury, idolatry, etc.—The wisdom of the flesh is death: but the

wisdom of the spirit is life and peace. Because the wisdom of the flesh is an enemy to God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be. And they who are in the flesh cannot please God—Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh—There was given me a sting of the flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me—They that are Christ's have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences” — *Galat.*, v. 17, 24. *Rom.*, viii. 6. *II. Corinth.*, x. 3, xii. 7.

4<sup>o</sup>. Our warfare is against *False Teachers* and their *Heresies*. “Beware of false prophets—And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them—Beware of dogs; beware of evil workers; beware of the concision—Beware lest any man cheat you by philosophy and vain deceit—Shun profane and vain babblings; for they grow much towards ungodliness. And their speech spreadeth like a cancer...But the *sure foundation* of God standeth firm”—*Matth.*, vii. 15. *Acts*, xx. 30. *Philip.*, iii. 2. *Coloss.*, ii. 8. *II. Tim.*, ii. 16, 19.

5<sup>o</sup>. Our warfare is against *Schismatics* and their *Schisms* and *Strifes*. “I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms

among you: but that you be perfect in the same mind and in the same judgment—God hath tempered the body together...that there might be no schism in the body, but the members might be mutually careful one for another...Now you are the body of Christ—Where envying and contention is, there is inconstancy, and every evil work"—*I. Corinth.*, i. 10, xii. 25. *James*, iii. 16.

6° Our warfare is against the *Persecution of Slander* and the *Persecution of the Sword*; by which means the Devil has so often tried to beat down the Church, to silence her voice, to cramp her energies, to sweep her off the face of the Earth. "Blessed are you, when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake—They will deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And you shall be brought before governors and before kings, for my sake—Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul—Remember my word that I said to you, The servant is not greater than his master: if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you—And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues...And they were all astonished, and wondered, saying one

to another, What meaneth this? But others mocking said, These men are full of new wine—Calling on the Apostles, after they had scourged them, they charged them that they should not speak at all in the name of Jesus”—*Matth.*, v. 11, x. 17, 28. *John*, xv. 20. *Acts*, ii. 4, 12, v. 40.

In a word, the warfare of the Church is against all sin, and all that leads to sin, or encourages and protects it; against all force or stratagem of men seeking her ruin.

56. SIXTHLY: It seems to me, therefore, very plain, that, as our Lord meant to indicate, by the “Gates of Hell”, the great antagonist power ever warring to “prevail against the Church”; and, as this great power or combination of powers is represented through the whole New Testament, in the clearest and most emphatic language, to be the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, assailing her through slander, persecution, heresy, and all other sins; therefore these, with all their energies, instruments, and operations, are the gates of Hell.

57. Enough has been said on this phrase. The next thing we have to consider is the relation of the word *it* in the phrase, “prevail against it”; whether the *rock* or the *Church* built on the rock be referred to. Maldonatus states that all writers

except Origen and Chrysostom, refer *it* to the *Church*; and that they, though of opinion that it may be referred either to the *Church* or the *rock*, yet think that the reference to the former is more probable. Bloomfield says that, “Almost all expositors of note are agreed in referring it to *εκκλησιαν*, both as it is the *nearer* antecedent, and because there thus arises a better sense”.

The reasons for preferring this opinion are 1<sup>o</sup>. the universal agreement of Fathers, and commentators ancient and modern.

2<sup>o</sup>. The *Church* is, as Bloomfield and others observe, the nearer antecedent. The relative is always referred to the nearer antecedent, unless there be something in the text or context to indicate the contrary. This is the usage of speech, and so men interpret language.

3<sup>o</sup>. The *Church* is represented as a city or fortress built on the rock: the “Gates of Hell” present a similar image. The latter is therefore more naturally exhibited as an antagonist power to the former than to the rock.

4<sup>o</sup>. In the parallel passage quoted above from *Matth.*, vii. 24, 25, the fury of storm and flood is represented as assailing not the rock foundation but the house built on it.

58. The sense however comes exactly to the same, whether *it* refers to the *Church* or the *rock*. If I say, “that house is built on a most solid foundation, and no violence of wind or rain will ever move it (the foundation)”; I am at once understood to imply that neither will they prevail against the house. For, as I have already proved at great length, when we speak of a house being built on a firm foundation, we always imply that the house itself is proportionately secure: and the more emphatically we assert the solidity of the foundation, the more emphatically do we at the same time assert the security of the superstructure: and if we say the foundation is so firm that nothing can destroy it, we thereby say or imply the same of the house built on it. On the other hand, if I say “that the house is built on a most solid foundation, and nothing can destroy it (the house)”; I am at once understood to mean that the house is thus secure on account of the firmness of the foundation, and that the foundation is as indestructible as the house. After all that has been said on the force of this image, I think it needless to illustrate the present assertion farther. The rock is so strong that the gates of Hell cannot prevail against it: therefore neither can they prevail against the Church built

on it. The Church is so strong that the gates of Hell cannot prevail against it: therefore neither can they prevail against the rock on which it is built.

59. So much for the meaning of the clause, “and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it”. Its connexion with the preceding must be plain from what has been said, and is indeed plain enough from the words themselves. The triumph of the Church over the gates of Hell is a consequence of its being built on so solid a foundation, and an evidence of the same. Thus if I say, “That house is built on a firm foundation, and it will not fall”; I am understood to mean that it will not fall, because it is built on a firm foundation—as if I said in terms “and *therefore* it will not fall”; and that the fact of its not falling is a proof of the solidity of the foundation. Or if I say, “John is a conscientious man, and he will not neglect his duty—John is a brave soldier, and he will not turn his back to the enemy—John is a stout man, and he will bear that load”, etc.; every one would understand me as meaning that his observance of duty is the result of his conscientiousness, and a proof of it; that his keeping his ground is the result of his courage, and a proof of it; that his

sustaining the load is the effect of his strength, and a proof of it. Or if I say, “John is a fearless man and a good shot [rock], and the robbers [gates of Hell] will not be able to force an entrance into his house [prevail against it]”; I mean that John by his courage and his skill in the use of firearms will keep them out. This therefore is the meaning of the words of our Lord—Thou, Peter, art made by me a most solid foundation, and on this most solid foundation I will build my Church, so that—as a consequence and a proof of the solidity of the foundation and of the edifice—no hostile power shall overthrow it.

60. This clause, then, introduces a new idea, which is but a developement of the preceding. Peter is the strong rock of the whole Church: by him therefore will it be kept firm and consolidated in indestructible unity—kept by him so firm and unrent, that the most powerful and terrible enemies, the enemies who are everywhere in Scripture represented as always battling against it with all their force, always seeking its utter destruction with undying rage and unrelaxing energy, will never for a single moment conquer it.

§ 5. *Doctrinal conclusions from the preceding.*

61. Some of these doctrinal conclusions have been already noted, as being directly and formally signified in the literal exposition of the figure used by our Lord. We shall, however, briefly state them here.

FIRST CONCLUSION.

Peter was established by our Lord as *the* means of imparting to the Church Indefectibility and Unity, and of permanently securing these properties in her.\* This, we have seen, is the natural and necessary meaning of the image under which Peter is represented in his relation to the Church, her rock-basis, her strength and support, through which she is compact and strong, and so compact and strong as to overcome the deadliest aggression. I could not develope this farther, except by repeating, in the same or other words, or merely amplifying, what has been already said. The Church is invincible through Peter, she is undivided and one through Peter.

\* Indefectibility involves infallibility, and in the concrete *is* infallibility, though not infallibility alone: but I do not mean to introduce this topic into the present volume.

## SECOND CONCLUSION.

62. Peter was invested with supreme spiritual authority over the whole Church; that is, with supreme authority to legislate for the whole Church, to teach, to inspect, to judge, to proscribe erroneous doctrine or whatever would tend to the destruction of the Church, to appoint to offices, or remove therefrom, or limit or extend the jurisdiction thereof, as the safety or welfare of the Church would require; in one word, to exercise, as Supreme Head, and Ruler, and Teacher, and Pastor, all spiritual functions whatsoever that are useful or necessary for the well-being or existence of the Church.

63. *Note.* There is no limitation in the text before us: but I do not mean that an *unlimited* power was given to Peter. For God in giving this power to him here, or giving any power to any other person or body on any other occasion, of course, gives it *limited by what he has himself established as immutable*. Hence, however unlimited may be the form in which the authority is conferred, it is necessarily and from the nature of the case supposed to be limited by the natural and the

indispensable divine law. Hence also he has no power to do anything subversive of the constitution of the Church as immediately established by Christ. Consequently, though he has the power of suspending the Episcopal form of government in particular countries, when and while the good of religion requires this to be done, as happened in England in the seventeenth century; though, when the good of religion requires it, he can alter the boundaries of episcopal sees, and even depose their present lawful occupants, without any canonical fault on their parts, and appoint others in their place, as was done in France in the beginning of the present century; though he can limit the jurisdiction of Bishops not only by reservation of sins, but in other ways—in all which, and similar cases, he is himself the supreme, and, to man, irresponsible judge; yet he cannot abolish the Episcopal order from the Church, which indeed his own œcumenical episcopate presupposes; nor can he reduce its authority to a merely precarious and nominal existence: because the Episcopate was established by our Lord himself, not, like general councils, to be called into action from time to time, when there would be an exigency for them, but as a permanent ordinary insti-

tution, an essential part of the system of ecclesiastical government fixed by the hand of God to last to the end of the world.

“The Roman Pontiff”, writes one of the most learned, sensible, and judicious of modern theologians of the Ultramontane School, “the Roman Pontiff does not govern the Church through Bishops, as if through his administrators and vicars: but he appoints them as so many princes, invested with ordinary power for the good of each particular church—though with due subjection to the Roman See, in the exercise of this power, for the preservation of unity of faith and communion in the universal Church. Then only does the Roman Pontiff interpose his authority, when the welfare or necessity of a particular diocese or of the universal Church requires such interposition..... Though, in ecclesiastical government, there is one who exercises the primacy, nevertheless, individual dioceses have their own Bishops, who govern them not by delegated, but by their own ordinary authority: for, as we said, Bishops are not mere administrators of the Pope, but true princes”.

The same writer observes, in another place: “It was Christ’s will that the Primal dignity should be circumscribed by no other limit than what its

abuse to the destruction of the Church would fix. For the Pontiff can do nothing that would tend to the destruction of the Church: and if he attempted anything of the kind, his acts would be held null and void. But for edification he can do all things".\*

64. I now come to prove my proposition. Peter, as we have seen, not only *was to be*, but was by him who had all power, *appointed to be* the Rock of the Church: that is, as we have also seen, *to sustain, unite, defend, and secure against her most*

\* "Nec enim Romanus Pontifex per episcopos veluti per administratos aut vicarios suos Ecclesiam regit; sed eos constituit tanquam totidem principes, ordinaria potestate instructos ad uniuscujusque Ecclesiæ peculiaris bonum, quamvis cum debita subjectione in hujus potestatis exercitio a Romana Sede, ad servandam unitatem tum fidei tum communionis in Ecclesia universa. Tunc solum intervenit auctoritate sua R. Pontifex, cum aut alicujus peculiaris diœceseos aut Ecclesiæ universalis utilitas sive necessitas id ipsum postulat".

"In quo [Ecclesiastico regimine] quamvis unus sit qui primatum exercet, nihilominus singulæ diœceses suos habent Præsules, qui non precaria auctoritate sed propria et ordinaria eas regunt; nec enim, uti diximus, Episcopi meri sunt Papæ ministri sed veri principes".

"Nullo alio limite voluit Christus primatiale circumscribi dignitatem præter illum, quem præfigeret ejus abusus in destructionem Ecclesiæ. Nihil enim Pontifex potest efficere, quod vergeret in Ecclesiæ destructionem; ac, si quid ejusmodi moliretur, nulli censerentur ejus actus. At in ædificationem omnia potest"—PERRONE, de Locis. P. I, n. 617, 619, 715. See also Concil. Trident. Sess. xxiv. c. 4. Concil. Turon. 1849, Decr. iii. etc., etc.

*deadly and powerful enemies, the whole Church of Christ.* Now I assert, that to appoint to such an office, to appoint to the discharge of such duties, is to confer sovereign authority, as I have described it, over the whole Church.

Observe the distinction I have drawn between *being* and *being appointed* the Rock of the Church. A man may, without any commission from a higher authority, without any commission from any one, by his force of character, or his courage, or his address, or his eloquence, or perhaps by cajolery, and fraud, and swindling, succeed in rescuing a whole nation from great perils, in defending her rights, or in winning and establishing her independence. In such a case, either he is invested with no authority beyond that of moral influence, or, as would more commonly happen, and in a desperate and protracted struggle must of necessity happen, he exercises a real coercive authority, voluntarily conceded to him by the nation in whose cause he is engaged, or seized and enforced by the sword. In this latter case of a lengthened conflict, it is evident that he must, as I have said, possess authority in some way: still, at least until affairs are settled, it is not authority legally established, derived in the regular constitutional way.

But when a regularly constituted society is threatened with fatal dangers, and a man is appointed to consolidate and unite the society, to keep it consolidated and united, to protect and secure it against those dangers; and appointed by one who possesses supreme authority over the society, authority to invest whomsoever he pleases with any extent of jurisdiction therein; so to appoint is to confer supreme authority on the person appointed, and, if the same plenary delegation of some other or others is not made, authority subordinate only to that of him who appoints. The person thus appointed receives, from the very nature of such appointment, the right of inspection through the whole society; the right of seeing that every man and especially the subordinate officers do their duty; the right of examining into treasonable practices, if such should occur, of condemning, punishing, and warning against them; the right of making all such arrangements, permanent or temporary, general or particular, as he may deem conducive to the prosperity and internal or external security of the community; the right of making such transfers, changes, and limitations in the subordinate functions as he may deem expedient—always, of course, saving the constitutional basis

established by the First Supreme Authority, and which, I suppose, the vicarious supreme ruler expressly prohibited from touching; the right of reprimanding, rewarding, promoting, and the like, according to individual merit or demerit and the exigencies of the public good. All this is necessarily involved in the very idea of such a commission as that I contemplate. Otherwise the commission is futile, delusive, self-contradictory. For if a man is legitimately appointed to consolidate and secure the whole community, surrounded as it is with powerful, wily, and determined enemies on all sides, he has *authority* to consolidate and secure it. But how can he be said to have authority to effect this end, if he has not authority to adopt the means which, from the nature of the thing, are *the* means, the absolutely essential means of effecting the end? Without this authority he might be *called* the Rock of the community, its strength, its security, its bulwark; but he could not be *truly* called so. He would not be the Rock, but a phantom and a name.

If an army—and what else is the Church but an army? What is the image under which it is represented in the very text before us but that of a militant power, the *Church militant*, as we call it,

warring with the powers of darkness? But what I say of an army will apply just as well to any other community of men. If an army is engaged in war, and a man is solemnly, and legitimately commissioned by the Sovereign Power to unite that army, and consolidate it, and make it victorious over its enemies; if he has no power to adopt the means necessary to strengthen and combine its energies, the officers may disobey him as often as they please, and he has no power to bring them to order, to reprimand or punish them; or rather they are equal to him in authority, and their violations of his commands are not acts of disobedience, for he has no right to command them; divisions creep in, regiment quarrels with regiment, batches of officers combine against each other, they have no unity of plan or action, and he has no authority to adopt the ordinary and necessary means of putting down dissension and establishing unity; treason creeps in, and he has no authority to investigate, or judge, or punish; colonels are dissipated and negligent, and discipline is gone to pieces in their regiments, and he cannot lift his little finger to remedy the evil; men are in offices of trust for which they are unfit, and he cannot supersede or change them; the enemy is in motion and bearing

down upon the lines in strong and serried ranks, and he has no power to issue general orders; every captain pursues his own tactics. He is commissioned to combine the army and secure its triumph, and he has no authority to adopt the means necessary for its combination and triumph: then he is at once a rock and a shadow, a reality and a mere name, strength without strength, power without power, a contradiction, and an impossibility. It is evident that to appoint a person to the aforesaid function *is*, by the very fact, to confer upon him the aforesaid power. That is, the appointment not merely supposes such power already given or to be hereafter given, but *is in itself the actual collation of the power.*

65. When, therefore, St. Peter was appointed by the all-wise, all-powerful God himself, in these solemn words, on that solemn occasion, in presence of the whole body of the future chief rulers of the Church, to be, in the fulness of time, the Rock of the whole Church, its principle and centre of unity, its strength and principal protection against its most potent assailants, he was appointed thereby, appointed in that very appointment, to become the Sovereign Ruler and Pastor and Teacher of the whole Church, to receive the plenitude of jurisdic-

tion for ordaining all things conducive to the well-being and safety of the Church. All this appears to me nothing more than the clear, simple, natural evolution of the meaning of our Lord's words.

66. But when we examine the Scriptures themselves to find therein what were the specific means ordained by Jesus Christ for building up, sustaining, defending the Church through all time, our conclusion becomes still more evident.

I. First of all, we see faith represented everywhere in the Scripture as the root and foundation of all justice,\* the essential element of the Church's life and vigour. Without faith there is no spiritual life. In losing faith, the Church perishes, ceases to be a true Church, is broken in pieces and vanquished and utterly destroyed by the gates of Hell. This important point, which we establish in its proper place, in treating either of the Unity or of the Infallibility of the Church, I shall here briefly illustrate by only one or two references, supposing the rest. "The just man liveth by faith—Being

\* Concil. Trid. Sess. vi. c. 8. Faith, however, is not the first grace; for that grace is prior, which, as it anticipates the will, so also anticipates faith. Constitut. Pii VI. *Auctorem Fidei*, Prop. 22. Ex S. August. de domo perseverant. c. 16. *Proposit.* Quesnell 26, 27.

justified therefore by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access through faith into this grace—For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus—For by grace you are saved through faith—Without faith it is impossible to please God”, etc. (*Rom.*, i. 17. *Galat.*, iii. 11. *Heb.*, x. 38, xi. 6. *Rom.*, v. 1. *Galat.*, iii. 26. *Ephes.*, ii. 8).

67. Consequently we find that the *teaching of the faith, the careful watching over its integrity and purity, constant and anxious vigilance of the pastors over their flocks to detect and expose all attempts at corruption of the faith, open denunciation of those who make such attempts and warning against them*, and the like, are the means established by God for the perpetuation and preservation of faith; that is, for the preservation of the essential principle of the life of the Church; that is, for the preservation of the Church herself. The adoption of which means is frequently and earnestly urged by our Lord and the inspired writers as a paramount pastoral duty.

“Going therefore teach ye all nations...Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you”—*Matth.*, xx. 19, 20.

“You shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem,

and in all Judæa, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost end part of the Earth"—*Acts*, i. 8.

"The things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also"—*II. Timoth.*, ii. 2.

"For a bishop must be without crime...embracing that faithful word which is according to doctrine, that he may be able to exhort in sound doctrine and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many disobedient, vain talkers, and seducers, especially they of the circumcision: who must be reproved...Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith...Speak thou the things that become sound doctrine...Let no man despise thee—Admonish them to be subject to princes", etc.—*Tit.*, i. 7, etc.—ii. 1, 15—iii. 1.

"As I desired thee to remain at Ephesus when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some not to teach otherwise...These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth...This precept I commend to thee, O son Timothy; according to the prophecies going before on thee, that thou war in them a good warfare; having faith and a good conscience, which some rejecting have

made shipwreck concerning their faith. Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme...Attend unto reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine...Take heed to thyself and to doctrine: be earnest in them...These things teach and exhort...O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding the profane novelties of words...I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead by his coming, and his kingdom: Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine...But be thou vigilant, labour in all things, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry...I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith"—*I. Timoth.*, i. 3, 18, etc.—iv. 11, etc.—*vi. 2, 20. II. Timoth.*, iv. 1, etc.

"I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have preached it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house...Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. I know that after my departure ravening

wolves will enter in among you not sparing the flock. And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, keeping in memory that for three years I ceased not with tears to admonish every one of you night and day"—*Acts*, xx. 20, 28, etc.

I might accumulate texts of a similar import, without end. But these are abundantly sufficient to prove my assertion that the means established by God for the preservation of the faith are, as stated above: to *teach*, to *witness*, to *exhort*, to *admonish*, to *charge*, to *preach the word*, to *command*, to be *earnest* therein, to *take heed to the flock*, to *rule*, to *watch*, to *reprove*, to *rebuke sharply*, to be *instant in season and out of season*, to *labour in all things*, to cut off by *delivering to Satan* those who try to corrupt the faith, to *war a good warfare*, to *fight a good fight*, etc.

As then to him, to whom is committed the charge of preserving and defending the whole Church and of keeping it one, is thereby committed the charge of preserving and defending, before all things, the faith of the whole Church and keeping it one: so on him is imposed the duty, to him is committed authority, to use the

necessary, the divinely established means of fulfilling that charge; that is, it is his duty and his right to teach the universal Church, to exhort, to admonish, to command, to watch, to reprove, to punish, to cut off infectious members everywhere through the universal Church; that is, he has received sovereign and plenary jurisdiction, such as I have claimed for St. Peter, in reference to doctrine.

68. II. As to the means established by God for the integrity, the unity, and security of the Church in all other respects, they are analogous to and in great part the same with those established for the preservation of faith, and they lie on the very surface of the Scripture. We see that a legislative and executive authority was established, an authority to make such laws as would be deemed expedient according to persons, times, and places, and an authority to enforce these laws by inspection, admonition, reproof, spiritual punishments. We see that an authority was established to prescribe certain spheres of jurisdiction, to appoint pastors, in a word, to make all such arrangements as would conduce to the better order of the Church in worship and in everything, or would conduce to the greater efficiency of the sacred ministry.

69. All this is evident enough from the texts already quoted, in which we see, from one main point of the system, the nature and spirit of the whole. It is still more explicitly contained in other texts, and in the history, so far as this is exhibited to us, of the actual working of the Apostolic ministry.

“If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican. Amen, I say to you, whatever you shall bind upon Earth, shall be bound also in Heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose upon Earth, shall be loosed also in Heaven”—*Matth.*, xviii. 17, 18.

“He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me”—*Luke*, x. 16.

“I indeed, absent in body, but present in spirit, have already judged, as though I were present, him that hath so done, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, you being gathered together and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ”—*I. Corinth.*, v. 3, etc.

“If therefore you have judgment of things pertaining to this world, set them to judge who are the most despised in the Church”—*ibid.*, vi. 4.

"I hear that when you come together in the Church, there are schisms among you.....If any man be hungry, let him eat at home; that you may not come together unto judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come"—*ibid.*, xi. 18, 34.

"It hath seemed good to us, being assembled together, to choose out men and to send them unto you with our well-beloved Barnabas and Paul... We have sent therefore Judas and Silas...It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no farther burden upon you than these necessary things: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication"—*Acts*, xv. 25, etc.

"And [Paul] sending into Macedonia two of them that ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself remained for a time in Asia"—*Acts*, xix. 22.

"For this cause have I sent to you Timothy... who will put you in mind of my ways which are in Christ Jesus; as I teach everywhere in every Church"—*I. Corinth.*, iv. 17.

"Against a priest receive not an accusation, but under two or three witnesses. Them that sin reprove before all; that the rest also may have fear...Impose not hands lightly upon any man—

The things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also—For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldst ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee”—I. *Timoth.*, v. 19, etc. II. *Timoth.*, ii. 2. *Titus*, i. 5.

It is unnecessary to add more. From these texts, as well as from what have been cited above (*n.* 67), it is plain that the system of the Church, from the very commencement, was a system of legislative and executive authority: a system under which higher officers were appointed, were sent to govern in particular districts, and with power to appoint inferior officers under themselves to assist them in carrying out the work of the ministry: a system under which individuals were commissioned to particular offices, and transferred from one place to another, as the exigencies of religion required: a system under which laws, strictly so called, directed to a community and binding in conscience, were enacted, promulgated, and enforced: a system under which regulations of a local nature were in like manner enacted: a system under which the Pastors of the Church were empowered and bound

to inspect narrowly the conduct of those under their charge, to reprove delinquents even publicly, to cut off from the communion of the faithful the more grievous and scandalous transgressors: a system under which the superior pastors had authority to judge the inferior pastors, in the most formal and strictly judicial manner, by the examination of witnesses and by pronouncing sentence.

70. This was the system. This was the aggregate of means whereby sins and scandals were to be kept from the Church, or cast out of her: whereby unity, order, edification, the sanctification of souls were to be throughout promoted and preserved: that is, whereby the Church was and was to be built up, consolidated, secured against the Devil, and the world, and the flesh, secured against *the gates of Hell*.

Wherefore when Peter was constituted the Rock of the Church, to consolidate and secure her against the gates of Hell; that is, to consolidate and secure *that* true living Church which was built on him by Christ himself, *that very Church* which is delineated in Scripture as having her essential principle of life in faith, and her full life in perfect unity, in the destruction of sin, in the possession of all holiness—wherefore when Peter was constituted to consolidate

and secure *that* Church as thus delineated, thus formed by the divine hand; he was, *by the very fact*, invested with full authority to consolidate and secure her in the way and by the means established by God—as we have seen manifested in the record of his own word—for her consolidation and security, from the beginning and even unto the consummation. That is to say, from what we have just demonstrated, he received plenary authority over the whole Church to teach, to legislate, to inspect, to judge—in a word, to be the Sovereign Head and Ruler and Teacher and Pastor of the Universal Church.

### THIRD CONCLUSION.

71. The Supremacy promised and given to Peter was to remain permanently and for ever in the Church.

FIRST: The image of *Rock* under which this supremacy is symbolized indicates permanency in the most forcible manner. The supremacy was, as we have seen, instituted by our Lord as an office, the supreme office in the Church. Peter, as invested with that office, was the Rock of the Church. It was not the flesh and bones of Peter that were the Rock; nor were his faith and love and other

like supernatural endowments alone; it was moreover his Primacy. And this Primacy, typified by the Rock, must be a stable, enduring, unfailing thing; not to die with Peter, and follow his flesh and bones into the grave.

72. **SECONDLY:** That the Church of Christ was designed to be not a temporary, provisional institution, like the Church of the Old Law, but a permanent institution to last to the end of the world, is a proposition, I presume, admitted by every class of Protestants to whom the present Essay would address itself. It is proved clearly from the very text before us, and from innumerable other parts of the Old and New Testaments: *e. g.* "In the days of those kingdoms the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people: and it shall break in pieces and shall consume all these kingdoms, and itself shall stand for ever"—*Dan.*, ii. 44. "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world"—*Matth.*, xxviii. 20. "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever"—*John*, xiv. 16: etc., etc. But I may here take the proposition for granted, without further argument.

Now the Rock is here represented as essential to the Church; just as essential to the existence of the Church, as the ground on which a house is built is to the existence of the house. Let the former be taken away, let it fail, and the latter instantly falls. The sovereign authority, the Primacy of Peter, is what the rock typifies. Consequently, as the Church is to last for ever, it is to last for ever.

73. **THIRDLY:** The constitution of the Church, as fashioned and established by God, was destined to be unchangeable. He *alone* is the architect and builder and maker of the Church—"I will build my Church"—"The head Christ, *from whom* the *whole body* (*παν το σώμα*) being compacted and fitly joined together"—*Ephes.*, iv. 15, 16; etc., etc. It is not in man's power to alter God's institutions, any more than it is in man's power to alter God's law—indeed they *are* his law. Man's alterations in God's work are not God's work, nor recognized by him. "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up"—*Matt.*, xv. 13.

But it has been proved that the Primal office is a part of the constitution of the Church as moulded and established by Christ. Therefore the Primacy was designed to be perpetuated in the Church.

74. **FOURTHLY:** We have proved that the Primacy was established for the support and defence of the Church: that it is through the Rock that the Church is to receive and retain her strength. But the Church was manifestly designed by God to be always strong and secure. Therefore the root and principle of her strength and security were always to remain with her.

75. **FIFTHLY:** In continuation of the same, the Church is to be for ever at war with the “Gates of Hell”: between her and the Devil and the World and the Flesh, there can never be peace or compromise. The Church is always victorious over these enemies; and we have proved that she is victorious *because* she is built on the Rock. From the Rock, through the Rock, by the Rock, she triumphs: as she triumphs always and for ever, therefore she has the Rock with her always and for ever.

76. **SIXTHLY:** We have proved that the Rock was established for the purpose of imparting unity to the Church. On the Rock, through the Rock, she is unrent, undivided, not two churches or many churches, but one Church — “I will build *my* Church”, not my churches, not my divisions or parts of a church, but **MY CHURCH**.

But the Church was destined to be always One,

as she came from the hands of her Maker. “ As thou hast sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for them do I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. And not *for them only* do I pray, *for them also who through their word shall believe in me*; that they all (*πάντες*) may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee; that they also may be *one in us*, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them, that they may be one, as we also are one: I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one (*τετελεσθεντος εἰς ἐν*); and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me”—John, xvii. 18, etc.

Here we see that the unity for which Christ prayed was the unity of the whole Church; a unity of the most perfect kind, likened to the unity of the Divine Persons in one God; a unity so resplendent in the Church, that the world would see therein a proof of the *divine origin* of the Church, and of her *sanctity*; a unity which Christ characterized in such strong words, and so earnestly prayed for; a unity which was to be the mark of his Church; a unity which he therefore designed to

be perpetual in his Church. I am not now discussing, I should rather suppose, the unity of the Church, as destined to be permanent; and therefore I abstain from further observations on it.

Therefore the Rock, which is the principle of this unity destined to be perpetual, was itself destined to be perpetual.

77. SEVENTHLY: The Primacy was *instituted* not for Peter's individual behoof, but for the benefit of the universal Church. It was indeed *conferred* on him in preference to the other Apostles, on account of his preëminent merits; just as a civil office is conferred on one man rather than another, on account of his superior fitness, but is not created for his aggrandizement, but for the common weal. That the office of Primacy was not *created* for Peter's aggrandizement, but for the common good of the Church, is manifest.

I. From the nature of the thing. It is *prima facie* infinitely improbable that an office of such enormous magnitude would be established as the simple reward of the merits, however eminent, of any individual. Public offices of authority, especially of high and extensive authority, involve in their very idea the simple relation of the welfare of those over whom the authority is to be exercised.

The creation of such an office for the primary or secondary purpose of rewarding individual services, jars with our conceptions of wise and just government. The ruler is for the people, not the people for him. I do not assert that it is absolutely repugnant in God to establish such an office for such end. But certainly when we have the simple establishment of the office, we are, as a matter of course, to understand it as for the common good, unless the contrary were clearly stated.

II. I know of no instance in the whole Bible, and I am quite sure—as sure as I can be without examining the whole Bible for the specific purpose of ascertaining this point—that there is no instance of God or any of his divinely commissioned delegates having created any office of jurisdiction for any individual's recompense. On the contrary, we see every where that offices of power are established directly and exclusively for the public good. Thus “If thy brother shall offend against thee, go, and rebuke him between him and thee alone. If he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother. And if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more.....And if he will not hear them, tell the Church.....Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind on Earth, etc.—All power is given to

me in Heaven and in Earth ; going therefore, teach ye all nations, etc.—Go ye into the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, etc.—You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, etc. — Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, etc. (*Matth.*, xviii. xxviii. *Mark*, xvi. *John*, xv. xx.; etc.).

Here the express object of the institution and conferring of these various powers, is to gain a brother, to bring to the faith, to cleanse from sin, etc.

III. The very words in which our Lord confers the Primacy show distinctly the end of its establishment — to secure and consolidate the Church; which I have already explained at such length as to render any further exposition or application unnecessary.

If then the office of the Primacy was established for the good of the universal Church; for the preservation of it, as we have seen, in its integrity and unity; there is no further and more explicit declaration required to signify to us its perpetuity. This follows from the nature of the thing. The Primacy was for the Church as *founded*: the Apostolate, as

*such*, was for the Church as *being founded*, for *the founding* of the Church. As the latter would, from the nature of the thing, not pass beyond the original founders: so the former would, from the nature of the thing, continue as it began. Indeed the Primacy would be more necessary after the Apostles had departed; and would naturally not come into full operation until after their departure. The Primacy was established for the good of the Church; and, as the good of the Church requires this office at all times, not only as much as in the Apostolic age, but far more, it was therefore to last for all time.

78. The foregoing considerations, though, for order's sake, marked under distinct heads, I do not propose as having each a distinct and decisive force of argument. But taken all together they seem to me fairly and conclusively to establish the perpetuation of the Primacy. The assertion, therefore, of Dr. Barrow and most other Protestant writers who treat this subject, That, granting the Primacy of Peter, the perpetuation thereof does not follow from our Lord's words, falls at once to the ground. On this succession however of the Primatial authority the fullest and clearest light remains yet to be

thrown, from the uniform teaching and usages of the Christian Church.

79. Here I, for the present, close the examination of the first part of the text from St. Matthew. It has grown under my hand to an extent far beyond what I, in commencing, anticipated. Many objections have been urged by Protestant divines against the preceding conclusions and the reasoning on which they rest. The examination of these, however—I doubt not the reader will agree with me—it is better to defer, until we shall have gone through the whole of the text of St. Matthew, or perhaps until we shall have fully treated the proof from the three texts of Matthew, Luke, and John, indicated in the commencement of this essay: otherwise I should have to conclude the present volume without concluding the proof even from the first of those texts. Meantime I promise the reader that all the objections which I think at all worthy of notice will in the proper place be subjected to the fullest investigation. We now proceed to the argument from

## II. THE KEYS.

80. “And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven”.

§ 1. FIRST: It is evident, and admitted by all,

that these words were addressed to Peter, and that to him the keys were promised—"I will give to *thee*". The only dispute between us and Protestants is whether the keys were given exclusively to Peter; or promised to him first here, and afterwards given to the whole body of the Apostles, or, as several Jansenist writers have asserted, given to the whole Church; or promised here to Peter merely as the representative of the other Apostles or of the whole Church, and therefore promised to the whole body of Apostles or to the whole Church in him. This last opinion—that what was here promised to Peter, was promised to the rest in him their representative—has been already refuted (*n.* 33). The other interpretations—as stated in the same place (*n.* 31) and for the same reasons—will be examined and refuted hereafter.

§ 2. SECOND QUESTION: *What is meant by the kingdom of Heaven?*

81. The phrases *Kingdom of Heaven*, *Kingdom of Christ*, *Kingdom of God*, have different, though closely connected, meanings, in different parts of the New Testament. Sometimes they signify *Heaven*, as "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven—Unless a man be born again

of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”, etc.—*Matth.*, v. 3. *John*, iii. 5. Sometimes they signify the *Church*, as “Therefore I say to you that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you—Then shall the kingdom of Heaven be like to ten virgins”, etc.—*Matth.*, xxi. 43, xxv. 1. Sometimes they signify the *gospel*, the *revelation of Christ*, or *Christ himself*, or rather *his reign*, all taken, by an ordinary figure of speech, for the whole system of the Christian dispensation, as “Who was himself looking for the kingdom of God—To other cities also I must preach the kingdom of God—Then is the kingdom of God come upon you—The kingdom of Heaven is at hand”, etc. (*Mark*, xv. 43. *Luke*, iv. 43. *Matth.*, iv. 17, xii. 28). The phrases have other but cognate meanings.\*

82. In the text before us “the kingdom of Heaven” undoubtedly means the *Church*, the *kingdom of the Messias*. For, I. We shall immediately prove that Peter received a Primacy in this “kingdom of Heaven”. But certainly he did not receive

\* Parkhurst observes that “*the kingdom of Heaven, or of the Heavens* (is) a phrase peculiar to St. Matthew, for which the other evangelists use *the kingdom of God*”.

a Primacy in Heaven, a Primacy over the Angels and Saints.

II. The Primacy promised to Peter in the preceding member was evidently and confessedly a Primacy in the Church on Earth: we shall prove the same of the third member, "And whatsoever thou shalt bind", etc. It is in the Church militant that he was to be the Rock: it is in the Church militant he was to receive the power of binding and loosing: therefore it was in the Church militant he was to receive the keys. This reasoning is confirmed by the position of the present member, which lies between the other two: so that, if "the kingdom of Heaven" meant *Heaven*, we would have a transition from the Church in the first member to Heaven in the second member, and from Heaven in the second member back again to the Church in the third member—a harshness of construction which could only be softened by some words in the text clearly indicating such transition forward and backward: a harshness which certainly we are not justified in admitting without such clear evidence from the text. But there is not a syllable in the text to indicate any such transition. This reasoning is still more confirmed by what we shall hereafter

show, that the three metaphors used here by our Lord are used to signify the same *thing*, at least generically, under different aspects or *images*; and that the effect of this accumulation of metaphors is to make the idea more striking, to mark it more strongly, and, if I may so speak, to drive it home more forcibly.

83. The meaning of the phrase here is thus perfectly clear, and by no means *doubtful* and *difficult*, as Mr. Rose, in his note to Parkhurst, asserts it to be. I rather believe that Protestant divines, with hardly an exception, take for granted and evident that “the kingdom of Heaven” means the Church. But suppose that the phrase meant *Heaven*, it would come to just the same thing. For then the sense of the text would be, not that Peter was to receive jurisdiction to be exercised in Heaven, that is over the inhabitants of Heaven; but that his jurisdiction was from Heaven—Heavenly—divine—its acts ratified by Heaven, exercised, however, on Earth and over men (otherwise it could not be exercised at all, and the promise of it would be a mere mockery); which is exactly what we not only admit but maintain.

§ 3. THIRD QUESTION: *What is signified by the metaphor of the keys?*

84. The *keys* are here manifestly to be understood not in a literal, but metaphorical, sense. The question is, what is that metaphorical sense? I answer *Authority*, of which keys were the established symbol. This is proved,

FIRST: From the usage of Oriental nations. "Among oriental nations", says Cardinal Wiseman, "this connection of real power with these its emblems is very marked. We are told by the most accurate of Eastern annalists, how the keys of the temple of Mecca were in the hands of a certain tribe, and with it the command in that place; and so necessarily were the two conjoined, that when the material keys were extorted by fraud from their possessor, he irrevocably lost his dominion over the sanctuary. And, on another occasion, he showed that the possession of the emblem really conferred the power which it represented".\*

\* "Abul Feda. Specimen Histor. Arab Oxon. 1806. The narrative alluded to occurs p. 474 of the text, and 553 of the version. We are there told that the care of the temple of Mecca was with the tribe of the Khozaites, till its representative, Abu-Gashan, in a state of intoxication, sold its keys to Kosay in the presence of witnesses.

85. SECONDLY: The same type was also used among other ancient nations. Thus, in the Orphic hymn to Pluto (quoted by Parkhurst),

Πλουτῶν ὁς κατεχεῖς γαῖης κληδᾶς ἀπαστοῖ,  
Πλουτοδοτῶν γενεῦν βροτεῦν καρποῖς εὐιαυτῶν.

“Pluto, who hast *the keys* of all the Earth,  
Enriching mortals with the yearly fruits”.

“Hence Pluto and his wife Proserpine”, adds the same writer, “were by the Greeks and Romans represented with keys in their hands”. Æschylus (*Ixerid.* 299), in designating Io as the priestess or keeper of the temple of Juno, calls her “*key-holder*

Whereupon Kosay sent his son with them in triumph to Mecca, and restored them to the citizens. Abu-Gashan, on recovering his senses, repented when repentance was useless, and gave rise to the proverb, ‘a more unfortunate loss than Abu-Gashan’s’. Pp. 482, 561, we have another illustration of the same idea. ‘The superintendence of the temple, *and its keys*, were with the children of Ismael, without doubt, till this authority came into the hands of Nabath. After him it fell into the possession of the Jorhamites, as is proved by a verse in a poem of Amer, son of Hareth, a Jorhamite:

*We possessed the rule of the holy house of Nabeth.*

Thus the two ideas of simply possessing the keys of a temple, and ruling over it, are manifestly identified”—*Lectures on the Principal Doctrines*, etc., v. 1, p. 271, *second edition*.

of the temple of Juno", (*κληδουχον Ήρας δωματων*). Callimachus, in his hymn to Ceres, representing the goddess as a priestess, says that she "had a key on her shoulder", (*κατωμαδιαν δ' εχε κλαιδα*). It is probable that the usage of carrying the key in some instances on the shoulders partly originated in the fact stated by Jahn (*Arch. Bibl.* § 37); and Kitto (*Cyclop. of Biblical Literature*, sub voc. GATES), says that the keys were frequently made of wood, and were much larger than ours. Chardin, in his Travels in Persia (quoted by Glaire, *Introduct. a l'Ecriture Sainte*, vol. 2, p. 72), says that the Persians still use wooden keys. "Keys", says Jahn, "were not made of metal except for the rich and powerful, and these were sometimes adorned with ivory handles" (See *Odyssey*, xxi. 7). There is a particular propriety in carrying the keys on the shoulder when they are borne as a symbol of authority. For it is very common to speak of the *weight of office*, or *authority*, its *burden*, *pressure of heavy duties*, and the like: and to say of a person who is placed in an office of great trust and power, that "a weighty burden or a weighty responsibility is placed *on his shoulders*". Hence symbols of authority, which admit of being so carried, such as a sword, or mace, are often, even in our own time,

borne on or over the shoulder. There is a very remarkable passage in *Isaias* (ix. 6), illustrative of this, in which the thing symbolized is put for the symbol, and to which our attention will be directed by and by.

86. **THIRDLY:** In modern times and in these countries, owing to our less imaginative temperament, our business habits of thought, speech, and action, and to other causes, we are far less accustomed to the highly figurative and symbolical language, which prevailed and to this day prevails among the Eastern nations. Our poetry and our oratory often strike out into the boldest figures. But on calm solemn occasions, where our object is not to move the passions or fire the imagination, but to convey serious and important truth, such as was the occasion in which our Lord addressed St. Peter, we communicate our sentiments in language generally devoid of all figurative expressions beyond those which have almost lost their figurative significance. Much that to Eastern ears would have been most natural, appropriate, and expressive, would to us be overstrained, out of place, perhaps puerile and ridiculous. There is moreover a particular reason why the symbol of the keys would be of rarer use with us than with the ancient Oriental

nations. Symbols of this sort would be publicly carried for the purpose of striking: the small size of our keys, and the form in which they are commonly made, render them anything at all but striking. Hence, when symbols of authority are publicly used with us, the sword or mace is substituted for the ancient emblem. Nevertheless, we find that, even in modern times and in these countries, the keys as a sign of authority are by no means altogether antiquated. Thus

I. When the Sovereign makes public entrance into the metropolis or other cities which have a chief magistrate, the keys are presented to her by him, as a token of her superior authority. This ceremony, though now a mere ceremony, is a clear evidence of the symbolic meaning formerly attached to the keys as emblems of power. Cities are with us no longer protected by gates, and, I believe, very few of them have any gates at all. But the custom is a relic of the usages of other times, when its significance was more intelligible, real, and striking.

II. When a town or fortress or any such fortified place surrenders, the surrender is consummated by the governor delivering up the keys to the general of the victorious army. As in other cases

—as I have seen in one of the prints in Southey's Life of Nelson and elsewhere—the vanquished surrenders by presenting his sword, to the victor, the handle of it being directed towards the latter.

III. When a tenant is leaving a house, he surrenders his right of occupancy [*dominium usus*] by delivering up the keys to the owner of the house. So necessary is this ceremony, that, until it is completed, the tenant is still responsible, according to the terms of the contract or the general disposition of the law, for injuries done in the meantime to the premises: after the keys are formally delivered up, he is no longer responsible, and he loses all right of occupancy as much as if he never tenanted the house at all.

IV. When a man sells a house, his surrender of the right of ownership [*dominium proprietatis*] is consummated and signified by the delivery of the keys.

V. When a man is appointed steward or head servant in a house, the delivery of the keys to him is the sign of his installation in the office. He has been hired or appointed before; but it is on receiving the keys that he comes into the full exercise of authority.

VI. If a man has a number of clerks, or depen-

dents, or servants, or even of his own children, and, on his leaving home for some days, he hands over all the keys of his house to one of them in presence of all the rest; this simple act, though unaccompanied by a single word, is at once understood to confer upon the individual a certain power, in its own small way, supreme over all the rest, in all things that are under the keys, that is in a certain number of domestic matters.

87. FOURTHLY: The usage of Scripture puts the meaning and force of this symbol in the clearest light, and beyond the reach of all reasonable doubt or objection.

I. God, through the prophet Isaias, thus foretells the deposition of Sobna from an office of high authority, and the substitution of Eliacim in his place:\*

\* That the office conferred on Eliacim was one of high authority is evident from the whole context: but what the office was is not so evident. Some understand the Sobna and Eliacim mentioned here to be the same as those mentioned in IV. *Kings*, xviii. 18, and that consequently the latter held the office of chief ruler over the royal household, next after the king. Others, following St. Jerom, take them for different persons with the same names, and understand the office here promised to Eliacim to be that of high priest. This latter opinion seems to accord much better with the text of Isaias: but, so far as our present purpose is concerned, it is a matter of perfect indifference which opinion is preferred.

"And I will drive thee out from thy station, and depose thee from thy ministry. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliacim the son of Helcias. And I will clothe him with thy robe, and will strengthen him with thy girdle, and will give thy power into his hand; and he shall be as a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Juda. *And I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder;* and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a peg in a sure place, and he shall be for a throne of glory to the house of his father. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, divers kinds of vessels, every little vessel, from the vessels of cups even to every instrument of music. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the peg [Sobna] be removed, that was fastened in the same place: and it shall be broken and shall fall: and that which hung thereon shall perish, because the Lord hath spoken it"—*Isaias, xxii. 19—25.*

The preceding, which is the Douay translation of the Vulgate, is a pretty literal version of the Hebrew. The Septuagint version of the twenty-

second and twenty-fourth verses is much more forcible. It runs thus:

“And I will give to him the glory of David, and he shall rule, and there will be none to oppose him. And I will give to him the key of the house of David upon his shoulder; and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open...And every one honourable in the house of his father shall be obedient to him, from the least to the greatest, and they shall be hung upon him”.\*

Whatever version be taken, it is evident, *first*, that the office from which Sobna was to be ejected, and to which Eliacim was to be chosen, was not only an office of authority, but of very high authority. 1<sup>o</sup>. Because the Almighty himself not only deems the deposition and substitution so important as to have men’s attention directed to those coming events by a special and solemn prophecy; but he moreover represents himself as the agent in both cases: “*I will drive thee out—I will call my ser-*

\* Καὶ δῶσω την δόξαν Δαυΐδ αὐτῷ, καὶ αρξεῖ, καὶ οὐκ εσταί ὁ αντιλεγών· καὶ δῶσω αὐτῷ την κλειδὰ οικου Δαυΐδ επει τῷ μηκῷ αὐτοῦ· καὶ ανοιξεῖ, καὶ οὐκ εσταί ὁ αποκλειστός· καὶ κλειστέ, καὶ οὐκ εσταί ὁ ανοιγών.....Καὶ εσταί πεποιθως επ’ αὐτον πάς ενδόξος επει τῷ οικῷ του πατέρος αὐτού, από μικρού ἕως μεγαλού, καὶ εσονται επικρεμανενοι αὐτῷ.

vant Eliacim—and *I will clothe him*", etc. It is not possible that such solemn prediction and intercession would have regarded an office of no authority or mean authority.

2<sup>o</sup>. The phrases constantly used through the prophecy manifestly indicate this. Eliacim was to be clothed, strengthened, invested with the *robe*, the *strength*, the *power* of his predecessor: he was to be a *father* to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the house of Juda: he was to be for a *throne of glory* to the house of his father: he was to be the *stay and support* of others, from the least to the greatest. The Septuagint version expresses all this still more forcibly: he was to receive the *glory of David*; he was to *rule*, and *none should oppose* or gainsay.

88. *Secondly*: This is the sort of authority which is symbolized by the key. And this key was to be moreover the key of the *house of David*. It was to be moreover laid upon the *shoulder* of Eliacim; that is, a public investiture of power, that all might see it and acknowledge it (*see n. 85*).

The *key of the house of David* here solemnly promised by the Almighty God to Eliacim, was a symbolic promise of great power over the house of David: to which the *keys of the Church* solemnly

promised by the Almighty God to Peter may well be likened, as a similar symbolic promise of great power over the Church.

89. *Thirdly*: The three last verses of the preceding prophecy illustrate most powerfully what we have said (*n. 41, etc.*) on the force of the metaphor of the *rock*. Here Eliacim is represented as a fixture—peg or nail—*fastened* in a *sure* (“faithful” Hebr. and LXX.) place,\* fastened by the strong hand of God, the fixture itself not only strong and firm, but moreover sustaining whatever is hung upon it.

On the other hand, we have the peg (Sobna) who had been fastened in a sure place, broken by the divine hand, and fallen; and not only itself destroyed, but, because of its own destruction, bringing destruction on all that depended on it. Here we have exactly the same idea conveyed by the metaphor of the peg and what was hung on it, and by the metaphor of the foundation and what was built on it. The peg fastened by God in the

\* The Septuagint—so obvious was the meaning intended by the metaphor—translates the word *peg* or *nail* by *ruler*: “And I will fasten him a *ruler* in a faithful place”. (*Καὶ στησώ αὐτὸν ἀρχόντα εὐ τοῷ πιστῷ*). This verse\* should have been included in the extract given above (*n. 87*) from the Septuagint. It was omitted by I know not what oversight.

sure place is *strong itself*, and *therefore* what is hung upon it is *sustained*, kept from falling or being broken. The rock established by God is *strong itself*, and *therefore* what is built upon it is *sustained* unbroken and secure. The broken peg gives way itself, and what was hung upon it falls, and *therefore* falls. The foundation of sand is itself weak and gives way, and the house built upon it falls, and *therefore* falls. In the text of Isaias the peg is evidently a type for one possessing authority, so evidently that the Septuagint translates it *ruler*. The argument summed up in *n.* 49—60 is certainly very much strengthened by all this.

90. II. “I am the first and the last, and alive and was dead, and behold I am living for ever and ever, and have *the keys of death and of Hell*”.

It is Christ who here speaks, and by the metaphor of having the keys of death and of Hell, signifies his supreme power over both, having by death and resurrection vanquished the powers of both. He is thus represented in Scripture as the conqueror of Hell and Death.

“I will deliver them out of the hand of death, I will redeem from death. O death, I will be thy death, O Hell, I will be thy bite (or destruction)”—*Osee*, xiii. 14, referred to in *I. Cor.*, xv. 54.

“Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath destroyed death”—*II. Tim.*, i. 10.

“That through death he might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the Devil”—*Hebr.*, ii. 14.

The *keys of death and Hell*, are here therefore an emblem of the supreme dominion of Christ over both.

91. III. “These things saith the holy one and the true one, he that hath *the key of David*; he that openeth, and no man shutteth; shutteth, and no man openeth”—*Apoc.*, iii. 7.

These words refer to Christ, and the *key of David* signifies the supreme power of Christ in his spiritual kingdom, the Church; which power and kingdom were typified by the temporal power and kingdom of David. Thus in *Luke*, i. 32, “He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father: and he shall reign in the house of Judah for ever”.

92. IV. “And I saw a star fall from Heaven upon the Earth, and there was given to him *the key of the bottomless pit*. And he opened the bottomless pit: and the smoke of the pit arose, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and air

were darkened with the smoke of the pit. And from the smoke of the pit there came out locusts upon the Earth", etc.—*Apoc.*, ix. 1, etc.

Here by *the key of the bottomless pit* is represented the great power which the Devil, or one of his ministers, was permitted to exercise: as is evident from his immediate exercise of that power, in opening the pit and causing the dreadful evils which are described in the succeeding verses as ensuing.

93. V. "And I saw an Angel coming down from Heaven, having *the key of the bottomless pit*, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. And he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up", etc.—*Apoc.*, xx. 1, etc.

St. Augustine, with whom many agree, says that by this Angel is meant Christ: according to others it denotes an angel in the usual sense of the word. But whoever is indicated, it is evident that by *the key of the bottomless pit* is here signified an immense power possessed by the Angel over the Devil. For the former is immediately represented as seizing the latter, casting him into the pit, and shutting him up there.

94. Besides these five, the word *key* occurs in three other texts of Scripture. It occurs in the text of *Matthew* under examination: in *Judges*, iii. 24, where it is used in its literal sense: in *Luke*, xi. 52, which is a text disputed between us and Protestants, and which I will discuss hereafter among the Answers to Objections; where it will be shown that the passage not only does not tell against us, but tells decidedly for us. These are, I believe the only passages in Scripture where the word *key* occurs, whether in a literal or metaphorical sense. The word κλεις occurs in *Job*, xxxi. 22, for the *shoulder-joint*: perhaps it occurs elsewhere in the same signification, or in some other signification different from that of *key*. But I can discover no other passage except those referred to where it signifies a *key*.

95. There is a remarkable passage in *Isaias*, already alluded to; one of the most luminous and celebrated in the whole of the Old Testament. "A child is born to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of peace. His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace: he shall sit

upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and for ever”—*Isaias*, ix. 6, 7. We have seen that the keys, as a symbol of authority, were often carried on the shoulder; and that in *Isaias*, xxii. 22, the elevation of Eliacim to the office there promised to him, was symbolized by laying the key upon his shoulder. In the present text of *Isaias*, the thing signified, authority, is substituted for the sign, keys—“The government is upon his shoulder”. A striking proof this is that the symbolic meaning of the keys was not only intelligible, but perfectly familiar in those days, as familiar as the ordinary meaning of ordinary words or of other ordinary signs.

96. We see, then, that in *every instance without exception* in which the keys are mentioned in Scripture as a symbol, they are the symbol of power: that the same symbolical meaning was familiar throughout the East: that among other ancient nations this symbol was established and intelligible, though perhaps not commonly used: and that even among ourselves and in our own time, there are several instances of its use. Moreover, no instance has ever been produced from Eastern or other nations, from ancient or modern

times, of keys having been used or represented as a symbol of any thing else than power: or, at least, as a symbol of any thing else, without also including power. THEREFORE, as the image of the keys is used symbolically by our Lord in his address to Peter, it symbolizes power: and as he received the keys of the whole kingdom of Heaven, not of a part only,—for the argument advanced before (n. 37) from the usage of Scripture to prove that by the word *Church*, in the previous member of the text, is meant *the whole Church*, applies with equal force to prove that here by the phrase *kingdom of Heaven* is meant *the whole kingdom of Heaven*: nay with greater force; for the phrases “kingdom of Heaven”, “kingdom of God”, “kingdom of Christ”, occur *upwards of one hundred times* in the New Testament, and are never, not even once, taken for a part but for the whole kingdom of Heaven, of God, of Christ—As Peter received the keys of the whole kingdom of Heaven, that is, of the whole Church, therefore he received jurisdiction over the whole Church.

#### § 4. *Doctrinal Conclusions from the preceding.*

##### FIRST CONCLUSION.

97. The image under which Peter was repre-

sented in the preceding member was that of Rock of the Church: here he is represented as King of the Church. Christ himself the divine eternal Rock made Peter also Rock; the former being Rock of this Rock. The Church is consolidated on Peter the Rock, and all are consolidated on Christ the Rock. So Christ himself, the divine eternal King, makes Peter also King: Christ had the keys, and he gave them to Peter—"I will give to *thee* the *keys*": Christ possessed Sovereign power, and he invested Peter with Sovereign power—Sovereign yet vicarious and subordinate to his own, and without any limits save those already stated (*n.* 63). With these limitations, the Sovereignty of Peter over the Church is as Christ's Sovereignty: it is Christ's sovereignty in Peter. "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven". What keys? What power? The keys, the power which Christ himself possessed, and alone possessed until he shared them with Peter; and still possesses, but now shared, communicated but not alienated, elevating Peter but not lowering Christ, giving much and losing nought.\* "I will give the keys": *my* keys: not power different

\* See *ante*, *n.* 21, extract from ST. BASIL.

from my own, but my own power: the power that I have is the power I communicate to thee, the power thou wilt have: the same in thee as in me, because communicated from me to thee, because it is mine communicated; the same in kind, yet inferior and less, because it is communicated from me the infinite to thee the finite, because it is communicated in the measure I will.

Peter's sovereignty over the Church, then, is Christ's sovereignty thus communicated. "He that hears you hears me". What was Christ's sovereignty? How was it exercised? It was a power to teach, to legislate, to admonish, to do all things that contribute to the building up and well-being of his own mystical body. So Christ exercised his power: he taught, he legislated, he admonished, and so forth. This then is Peter's power of the keys: unless limits are prescribed by the same hand that gave the keys, limits there are none even hinted at in the text before us. No limits are marked out elsewhere save those which I have already noticed (*n.* 63). To deny Peter's power is to deny Christ's power: for Christ gave to Peter his own power, of his own power, though not all of it. Peter had what Christ gave him: and if he had not the plenitude of power which Christ's

words signify, then Christ had not the plenitude to give, or gave in words what in reality he did not give.

98. Again: Christ gave the Church to Peter as a kingdom to its king. “I will give to thee the keys of *the kingdom of Heaven*”. *Kingdom* and *king* are correlative terms. How is this kingdom ruled? Search the Scriptures. We have searched them already (*n. 66, etc.*); and we have found how it is ruled.—What is meant by ruling the Church, by ruling it according to the will of Christ, but to exercise authority therein for the safety and advantage of the Church, for the destruction of sin, the propagation of virtue, and the establishment of order? “Let all things be done decently and according to order”—*I. Cor.*, xiv. 40. We have found that the Church is ruled by preaching and teaching God’s word; by detecting, condemning, and banishing out of it all erroneous doctrines; by making laws and other enactments demanded by the general or particular spiritual welfare: in a word—not to repeat what has been already fully gone into—by the discharge of the various functions of the sacred ministry which the Scripture sets forth in the teaching and practice of the first rulers of the Church.

Peter, then, inasmuch as he received Christ's authority over the whole Church—inasmuch as he was appointed Sovereign Ruler over the whole Church, was thereby made "Head of the whole Church, and the Father and Doctor of all Christians, and received full power to Feed, Rule, and Govern the whole Church".

## SECOND CONCLUSION.

99. Peter is the principle of the Church's unity. There is but one Church, one "kingdom of Heaven", and one chief pastor over it. If one supreme government had not been established, to which all persons holding authority in the Church should be subject, then the different congregations—diocesses, or provinces, or whatever they might be called—would be independent; for, in this supposition, there would be no one authority to bind them all into one. One bishop would not be by divine law subject to another: the particular churches of one country would not be subject to the particular churches or any one of the particular churches of another country: as, in fact, abstracting from Peter and his successors, one bishop is not subject to another by divine law, nor one particular church to another. Then there would be many

*similar* churches perhaps, as having the *same form* of government, the same faith, the same religious rites and worship in things essential: but they would not make *one* Church; any more than a number of kingdoms or empires, having different supreme governments, though having the same form of government, the same usages, the same language, and in all other respects alike, would not be one kingdom or empire, but just as many as there would be supreme governments, kingly or other. They would be *similar*, but not *one*. It is the one supreme authority, whether regal or aristocratic, or whatever else it may be, which makes the one empire. Peter was made the One Supreme Authority of the Church. He is the Sovereign of the whole Church, and *therefore* the whole Church is one. Through Peter it is one: he is the principle of its unity. “There is one Church”, says St. Cyprian, “founded by Christ our Lord on Peter as the source and principle of unity”. The words of St. Jerom are often quoted: “Among the twelve one is therefore chosen, that, a head being established, the occasion of schism may be taken away”.

## THIRD CONCLUSION.

100. Peter is also the Centre of Unity: that is, all must be united to him, as subject to him. For he is placed over the whole Church, and therefore there is no one in the Church who is not, by the very fact, necessarily under him. And therefore whoever is not subject to him is, by the very fact, out of the Church. Something more remains to be said on this point, which will be introduced at the close of the Scripture arguments.

## FOURTH CONCLUSION.

101. The Primacy of Peter is to remain permanently and for ever in the Church.

The Church as constituted by Christ is to remain for ever. The Church is a kingdom. Nothing is more essential in the constitution of a kingdom, than the supreme government. Without this, not only no great empire, but no small kingdom, could last. The form of supreme government which Christ established in his kingdom is regal, as we have just proved. Therefore this form was designed to last to the end of the world.

It is unnecessary to develope this farther. Most, if not all, of the arguments adduced before (*n.* 71, *etc.*) will apply with equal force here.

[It may not be useless to observe here, that in *n.* 52, I have stated that Bloomfield tenaciously maintains that *hades*, in the first member of our text from *Matthew*, xvi., means simply *death*. He says, that the constant import of the phrase, “in the Greek classical writers, the Old Testament, and the Rabbinical writers (where it constantly denotes the grave, or the entrance to it, the state of the dead), must determine the expression [ $\pi\pi\lambda\alpha\iota\alpha\dot{\imath}\delta\sigma\nu$ ] to mean simply *death*, *i. e.* the entrance into a new state of being”. Since *n.* 52 was written and printed off, however, I have found, in collating one of the texts quoted in the preceding section (*Apoc.*, i. 18), that, notwithstanding Dr. Bloomfield’s strong assertion, on *Matth.*, xvi., as to this meaning of the expression, he, in his note on the aforesaid text of the Apocalypse, thus writes: “On the expression  $\alpha\delta\eta\varsigma$  see Doddridge *in loco*, and especially Stewart in his Exegetical Essays...who shows that in the New Testament  $\alpha\delta\eta\varsigma$  signifies not *Hell*, but the *region of the dead*, the domains of death, or of him who hath the power of death—*Satan*”. If, in the New Testament, it signifies *the domains of Satan*, it strikes me that this is a pretty distinct way of saying that it signifies *Hell!*]

We now come to the third member of our text.

## III. THE POWER OF BINDING AND LOOSING.

102. "And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon Earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven". This is plainly figurative language.

The first question is, whether this is the introduction of a new metaphor, or a continuation of the preceding metaphor of the keys. The question, which at first sight would appear to be a merely critical one, and is in reality very much so, has, nevertheless, as we shall see, certain dogmatical consequences.

There is a diversity of opinion on this question, Catholics and Protestants being on both sides. Thus, among Protestants, Stanley ("Sermons and Essays on the Apostolic Age", p. 125) is decidedly for the continuation of the same metaphor: Bloomfield (*in loc.*) is about as decidedly against it. As to our Catholic writers, I cannot say which is the more common opinion among them—in truth the question is but lightly touched by any of them that I have seen; but thus much I can assert, that of those whom I have examined for the purpose, and who take either side, the far greater number are for

the opinion that *the binding and loosing* is but a continuation and developement of the metaphor of *the keys*. Stapleton\* and perhaps a few others are clearly for a diversity of metaphor. Most, however, pass over the question altogether, or speak obscurely on it, as Maldonatus, A Lapide, Bellarmine, etc.

§ 1. *Connexion of the metaphor of binding and loosing with the preceding.*

103. Those who hold that the metaphor of the keys is continued, sustain their opinion on the ground that in ancient times, in the East, doors were fastened or locked by tying them, and opened by loosing the string or rope that fastened them. John and others give a description of the ancient locks and keys in accordance with this view—a description to me not very intelligible, and, to say what I think, far from being solidly proved.

I am of opinion that the metaphor of “binding and loosing” is entirely distinct from the metaphor of “the keys”, just as much as the latter is distinct from the metaphor of “the Rock”. The following

\* STAPLETON, *Principia Fid. Cath. Contr. 2. L. 6. C. 1.* His argument is not conclusive.

are my reasons: and, taken together, they appear to me conclusive.

104. FIRST: It is not said or implied "whatever *door* or *gate* thou shalt bind", but implicitly "whatever *thing*": ὃ πάντα δησύς. The pronoun is too general to bear restriction to the one image of shutting or opening gates or doors.

105. SECONDLY: In not one of the eight texts quoted or referred to above (n. 87, etc.), in which the word key (*κλεις*) occurs, is there any allusion whatever to *binding* or *loosing* as denoting the use of the keys in shutting and opening. On the contrary, in such of them as contain any mention at all of shutting and opening, the words *shut* and *open* (*κλείω*, *ανοίγω*) are used. This is the case in five out of the eight texts, viz., *Judges*, iii. 25. *Isaias*, xx. 22. *Apoc.*, iii. 7; ix. 2; xx. 1. In the latter text the word *bind* occurs, but it is in reference not to the gates of the bottomless pit, but to the Devil. "And he laid hold on the dragon.....and bound him (*εδησεν αὐτὸν*) for a thousand years. And he cast him into the bottomless pit, and *shut* (*εκλείσεν αὐτὸν*) him up"—or rather "shut it up"; *αὐτὸν* being, to say the least, a doubtful reading.

106. THIRDLY: I have examined about sixty texts of Scripture, in the Old and New Testa-

ments, in which there is express mention of *opening* or *shutting* doors. Others still remain to be examined: but in every text, without exception, which I have examined, the words used are *open* and *shut* (*ανοιγω*, *κλειω*), or, in one or two places, words of like import: in not one of them is *loose* or *bind* (*λυω*, *δεω*) used. I shall give a number of examples.

I. Texts in which there is mention of *shutting* doors or gates.

“At the time of shutting (*εκλειετο*) the gate in the dark”—*Josue*, ii. 5. Same in *vers. 7*.

“And shut (*απεκλεισε*) the doors of the parlour”—*Judges*, iii. 21. “The doors shut (*εσφηνωμεναι*)”—*ibid.*, 24.

“Shut (*αποκλεισον*) the door—and he shut (*απεκλεισε*) the door”—II. *Kings*, xiii. 17, 18. Same in IV. *Kings*, iv. 4, 5, 21, 32; vi. 32.

“Achaz.....shut up (*εκλεισε*) the doors of the temple of God”—II. *Paralip.*, xxviii. 24. The same xxxix. 7.

“Enter into thy chamber shut (*αποκλεισον*) the door upon thee”—*Isaias*, xxvi. 20.

“And the Lord said to me this gate shall be shut (*κεκλεισμενη εσται*)”—*Ezechiel*, xliv. 2. The same xlvi. 2, 12.

"Enter into thy chamber and having shut ( $\chiλεισας$ ) the door"—*Matth.*, vi. 6.

"And the door was shut ( $\varepsilon\chiλεισθη$ )"—*ibid.*, xxv. 10.

"The door is now shut ( $\chiεχλεισται$ )"—*Luke*, xi. 7.  
The same xiii. 25.

"The doors being shut ( $\chiεχλεισμενων$ )"—*John*, xx. 19. The same *vers.* 25.

"And immediately the doors were shut ( $\varepsilon\chiλεισθησαν$ )"—*Acts*, xxi. 30.

II. Texts in which there is mention of *opening* doors or gates.

"And he opened ( $\etaνοιξε$ ) the doors of the house of the Lord"—*I. Kings*, iii. 15.

"And thou shalt open ( $\alphaνοιξεις$ ) the door and flee"—*IV. Kings*, ix. 3. The same *vers.* 10.

"Have the gates of death been opened ( $\alphaνοιγονται$ ) to thee"—*Job*, xxxviii. 17.

"Open ye ( $\alphaνοιξατε$ ) to me the gates of justice"—*Psalm*, cxvii. 19.

"And thy gates shall be open ( $\alphaνοιχθησονται$ ) continually"—*Isaias*, lx. 11.

"Open ( $\deltaιανοιξον$ ) thy gates, O Libanus"—*Zachar.*, xi. 1.

"At last came the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open ( $\alphaνοιξον$ ) to us"—*Matth.*, xxv. 11.

"To him the porter openeth (*ανοιγει*)"—*John*, x. 3.

"But an Angel of the Lord, by night, opened (*ηνοιξε*) the doors of the prison"—*Acts*, v. 19. The same, *vers.* 23; xii. 10, 14, 16; xvi. 26, 27.

"For a great door and evident is opened (*ανεῳγει*) unto me"—*I. Corinth.*, xvi. 9.

"A door being opened (*ανεῳγμένης*) to me in the Lord"—*II. Corinth.*, ii. 12.

"Praying withal for us also that God may open (*ανοιξῃ*) unto us a door of speech"—*Coloss.*, iv. 3.

107. FOURTHLY: The words *bind* and *loose* (*δεω*, *λυω*) occur frequently enough in both the Old and New Testaments, and in no instance do they signify the opening or shutting of gates or doors. It would be tedious to the reader to quote further.

From all this it appears to me quite certain that the metaphor of "binding and loosing" is a third image or symbol introduced by our Lord quite distinct from either of the former. We now come to investigate what this symbol imports in the text before us.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT VOLUME].

THE END.

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Auctore D. D. PATRÍCIO MURRAY.

In Collegio S. Patricii apud Maynooth, Sac. Theol. Prof.

[The composition of the present volumes has delayed, or rather entirely suspended, the preparation of the above work. This series of theological essays, as announced in the introduction to the first volume, was originally designed to extend but to five or six volumes. In order to have time to finish the Treatise *de Ecclesia*, as soon as possible, I mean to terminate the series with the next or, at most, the fifth volume.—P. M.]

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